Talks About Autographs

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AUTOGRAPHS

BY

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TO

FRANKLIN CARTER, LL. D.

PRESIDENT OF WILLIAMS COLLEGE

AS A SLIGHT TOKEN OF RESPECT AND REGARD

AND IN MEMORY OF THE PLEASANT DAYS OF

THE COMMENCEMENT OF 1896

THIS WORK IS

DEDICATED

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

TALKS ABOUT AUTOGRAPHS

I

"*March* 23, 1854. A snowstorm. Write and send off twenty-four autographs."

"*November* 25, 1856. I have lying on my table more than sixty requests for autographs."

"*January* 9, 1857. Yesterday, I wrote, sealed, and directed seventy autographs. To-day I added five or six more, and mailed them."

Such are the entries which from time to time Longfellow made in his journal, — entries which surely must have stirred remorse in the heart of many a collector of autographs. Not a word of impatience, much less of indignation, seems to have escaped from the gentle poet. He took the evil with the good, — the fame of a poet and the trouble which it brought with it. Of his Hiawatha ten thousand copies were sold in the first few weeks after publication. A little later he recorded that the sale was going on at the rate of three hundred a day. A snowy morning given up now and then to writing his name was

not, he may have thought, too great a penalty to pay for the fame which he enjoyed and for the dollars which came pouring in. Lowell had none of his brother poet's patience. He suffered under the infliction, and he made his sufferings known. An autograph book, he declared, was an instrument of torture unknown even to the Inquisition. When he did not recognize a correspondent's handwriting he would leave the letter unopened, till a great pile slowly accumulated on his desk. "I am thinking seriously," he wrote, "of getting a good forger from the state's prison to do my autographs; but I suppose the unconvicted followers of the same calling would raise the cry of convict labor."

Collectors do not go to work the right way when they want to get an autograph out of their man. They should approach him dexterously, and come unto him as delicately as Agag came unto Samuel. Now and then there has been seen a man as methodical as the Duke of Wellington, from whom an answer could always be drawn by a letter which had about it an air of business. It is said that his son's tailor, or some autograph collector who passed himself off as his son's tailor, — Mr. Snip I will call him, — once wrote to the old soldier to beg him make the young man settle his account. He received the following answer: —

"F. M. the Duke of Wellington begs to inform Mr. Snip that he is neither the Marquis of Douro's steward nor Mr. Snip's debt collector."

A feigned letter of business, however, would in general very rarely be found successful. If any answer were sent, it would almost always be in the hand of a secretary or a wife. Honester and gentler means should be used. The man to be hooked, like Izaak Walton's frog, "should be used as though you loved him." Dukes, no doubt, could not thus be caught; but then, fortunately, the signature of a duke, unless at the bottom of a check, with the rarest exceptions, is utterly worthless. If — which Heaven forbid! — I should wish to get an autograph out of a poet, I would address him after some such fashion as the following: —

DEAR SIR, — My love for your writings finds no other vent for its expression but in a way which I trust will not offend you by its being less spiritual than I could have wished. Will you accept a barrel of oysters which I am venturing to send you as a slight proof of my admiration of your genius?

I am, dear sir,

Your ardent admirer,

AUTOGRAPH HUNTER.

POET LAUREATE, ESQ.

P. S. When you acknowledge the receipt of the oysters, I should esteem it a great favor if you would do so in verse. If you generally drink Chablis with oysters, I shall be happy to send you half a dozen bottles.

Should your author inhabit a foreign country, whither delicacies are not easily sent, the persuasive method might be varied. He might be addressed thus: —

DEAR SIR, — May I venture to ask you for your autograph? The five-dollar bill which I beg to inclose will, I trust, be sufficient to cover the postage. Should there be anything over, I should esteem it a high honor if you would spend it in the purchase of a book, on the fly-leaf of which I would beg you to gum the subjoined inscription.

I am,

Yours respectfully and admiringly,

RARITY COLLECTOR.

NOVEL RUYTER, ESQ.

P. S. If you would add a sentiment to your autograph, I should esteem it an additional favor.

(Inscription.)

Presented to Novel Ruyter, Esq., as a slight tribute of respect for his genius, by an admirer in the New World.

I am assuming in all this that my autograph collector is willing to spend his money on his hobby somewhat freely. Without money, by those who are outside the world of letters, arts, science, or politics, a collection can scarcely be made. A hobby is generally a costly animal to keep; but what is spent on it is often saved in doctor's bills. It gives an interest to life, especially to the life of one who has retired from business. If ridden soberly, it is a good and faithful steed, on which for many a day a man may amble gently down the slope of life. It should neither be ridden to death, nor suffered to carry its bearer to the threshold of want. Poor men as well as the well-to-do sometimes get thrown by it to the ground. A second-hand bookseller once told me of a workingman who laid out at his shop much more than he could well afford. To escape the scoldings of his wife, he would smuggle each new purchase home at the bottom of the basket in which he brought from market the week's supply of potatoes. A friend of mine gave me, in my younger days, a letter of Dr. Johnson's. "There," said he, as I sat gazing on my treasure, "if you will take my advice, you will at once throw that letter into the fire." (A bright one was blazing before us on the hearth.) "If you keep it, it will probably tempt you into an outlay beyond your means, as

I have seen many a man before you tempted by his first autograph." I did not follow his advice, — the letter, in a frame, hangs on one of the walls of my study, — but I laid to heart his warning. Perhaps the danger was the less in my case as I had long possessed a small collection which came to me by inheritance.

My friend had himself for many years been a dealer in autographs, and in the long course of business had slowly made a noble collection, which he carried away into retirement, the adornment of his old age. He one day showed me a forged letter of Lord Byron's. Many years ago, one of the great London auctioneers — either Christie or Sotheby, I forget which — asked him and old John Murray, the poet's publisher, to call at his office, as he had a curiosity to show them. "Here," he said, when they came in, "are some genuine letters of Byron's, and here are forgeries of them. We must not mix them, for if we do we shall never be able to separate them." The imitation, they found, was perfect, not only in the writing, but also in the postmark and the seal. The watermark of the paper, moreover, was earlier than the dates of the letters. They had been executed by a man who there was good reason to believe was Byron's illegitimate son. By some curious chance the originals and the imitations had been sent in for sale at the same time. A

day or two later the forger came to the office. "I am not going to put up those letters for sale," the auctioneer said to him. "Then give me them back," the man replied. "No; they are locked up in this desk, and there they will remain. They are forgeries." The forger said nothing, but left the room. "What became of him?" I asked my old friend. "I believe he went to America," was the reply; "and there, no doubt, if he is still living, he is forging Byron's letters." He would have been just the man to do the autographs for Lowell; but such a career as his was likely to have been prematurely cut short.

For a long time past the price of autographs has been so steadily rising that a collector might silence the whisperings of prudence, or the upbraidings of a careful soul of a wife, by the glittering hopes of a profitable investment. At all events, he might flatter himself that when his collection was dispersed no loss of capital would be incurred. In a large collection which had been made with knowledge and with coolness, this, very likely, would be the case; but if it were small, however well chosen it might be, the chances of loss would be great. Where there are few lots there are few purchasers, and where there are few purchasers the regular dealers are often able to form an unrighteous combination by which they get documents of great value for a mere trifle.

Even when this danger is escaped, at a small sale chance and caprice have far greater play. The price, for example, of one of Dr. Johnson's autograph letters has risen by about a pound in the last nineteen years. In 1875, eighteen were sold by auction in London at an average of four pounds, five shillings, and eightpence a letter. Between 1888 and 1891, fifteen, of which I have account, were sold at an average of five guineas. One letter, however, which fetched six guineas in 1875, by some chance went for only two pounds, eight shillings, in 1888; while, on the other hand, the price of another letter rose from six pounds, fifteen shillings, to ten pounds. In these averages I have not included three lots for which extraordinary sums were paid. In 1875, for the famous letter in which the dauntless old man wrote to Macpherson, "I will not desist from detecting what I think a cheat from any fear of the menaces of a Ruffian,"[1] no less than fifty pounds was given, and well given, too. For a fiddle three or four times as much has often been paid. The possession of such a letter surely confers more distinction than half a dozen fiddles.

[1] I quote from the original as given in the auctioneer's catalogue. In the copy of the letter dictated by Johnson to Boswell from memory this sentence runs, "I hope I shall never be deterred from detecting what I think a cheat by the menaces of a ruffian." I wish the fortunate owner of the original would publish a facsimile, or at all events an exact copy.

In 1888, to the great astonishment of collectors, forty pounds was given for the following brief note to Oliver Goldsmith: —

SIR, — I beg that you will excuse my Absence to the Club; I am going this evening to Oxford.

I have another favour to beg. It is that I may be considered as proposing M[r] Boswel [*sic*] for a candidate of our Society, and that he may be considered as regularly nominated.

I am, Sir,

Your most humble servant,

SAM: JOHNSON.

April 23, 1773.
To Dr. GOLDSMITH.

It sold at the rate of twelve shillings and a penny a word. For "London" Johnson was paid ninepence halfpenny a line, and for "The Vanity of Human Wishes" tenpence; for each line in "The Traveller" Goldsmith received elevenpence farthing. This letter is distinguished from the hundreds of others in Johnson's autograph mainly by the fact that it is the only one extant written by him to Goldsmith. At the same sale the biddings rose to even a higher sum. Forty-six pounds was given for the letter in which Johnson signed himself "Yours *impransus*." It is not too much to assume that of the forty-six pounds, forty were paid for this one word. Never, surely, has

the greatest epicure or the wildest spendthrift been able to throw away on a dinner so much money as has been spent on the one modest word in which this needy author seems to hint to his employer that he was in want of one. "It is remarkable," writes Boswell, "that Johnson's letter to Mr. Cave concludes with a fair confession that he had not a dinner." What would have been the amazement of "the very good company" with whom the young author, fresh from Lichfield, used to dine at the Pine Apple, New Street, could they have known that the day would come when, for his hint that he wanted a dinner, enough would be given to pay his daily tavern-bill for nearly four full years! From what I learnt not long ago, I have little doubt that these high prices, though they were in part due to enthusiasm, were due also in part to fraud. Shortly before the sale, a dealer, who then held a high position, but who, a little later, died a bankrupt, sent to me, as the editor of "Boswell's Life of Johnson," the auctioneer's catalogue, and, in the name of a collector, asked me to indicate which of the letters had a peculiar interest. I pointed out these two, and showed him in each case in what that interest consisted. The "impransus" letter, I knew, had been sold by auction, a little earlier, for seven or eight pounds. It might, I thought, fetch two or three more. For

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the other I had no expectation that so much even as seven or eight pounds would be given. My surprise was indeed great when I learnt the result of my advice. I have been informed since that when this dealer was bidding, there was often present at the sale a man who would bid against him, to whom no lot was ever knocked down. It was this mysterious person, it was said, who ran up the two lots to their extravagant prices. The collector who employed the dealer was charged by him a certain percentage on the sums paid,— for what, I suppose, he was pleased to call his judgment. The more the autographs cost, the better was this judgment rewarded. Had the fellow stuck to his trade, he might have died a rich rogue, but he took to dabbling in stocks and shares, and got ruined.

Most collectors, of course, name a sum beyond which their agent must not carry his biddings. Sometimes, however, the limit is fixed absurdly low. A few years ago, I was shown by an auctioneer the original document by which Blackstone sold the copyright of his famous Commentaries. In the hope that it would be secured for the University of Oxford, before which the book had been read by the author in the shape of lectures, I informed Bodley's librarian of this great treasure. He undertook to direct his agent to bid for it. I was out of England at the sale, but on my

return I inquired with eager hope whether it had been secured. "No," the librarian replied. "The amateur collectors have of late so much run up the price of autographs that it is almost useless for us to bid against them." Chief among these collectors, if I remember rightly, he reckoned those wicked Americans, who, with their wealth, are sacking, as it were, the literary treasures of Europe. In the present case, however, these devastators were really not to blame. The librarian's reserve price, I ascertain, had been fixed considerably below a pound; at twelve shillings and sixpence, if my memory does not deceive me. For three dollars, even against Englishmen, Oxford could scarcely have hoped to secure so interesting an autograph of one of the most distinguished of her sons.

It too often happens that letters of great interest are destroyed through ignorance, indifference, or a perverted sense of duty. Boswell's curious correspondence with his friend Temple, the grandfather of the present Bishop of London, was sold for waste paper in Boulogne. Some of it was rescued from the butterman and published, but there are great and melancholy gaps left. The letters which Boswell had himself received from many of the most eminent men of his time were, it is believed, destroyed by his executors. A lady who gave me a copy of one of Johnson's

autograph letters informed me that, many years ago, an old friend had sent her a whole bundle of them, bidding her keep as many as she pleased. In her unfortunate modesty she retained but one. He told her afterwards that she need not have been so scrupulous, for all that she had returned he had thrown into the fire. A man who burns an autograph shows such an insensibility of nature, such a want of imagination, that it is likely that, in a more cruel age, he would have burnt heretics. Like the inquisitors of old, men have condemned to the flames letters full of life and thought and feeling, in the belief that they were only doing their duty. They have been shocked by the wrong that at times has been done by the publication of matters which either should not have been divulged, or at all events should have been kept secret till one or two generations had passed away. Literary men, even, have been guilty of this crime, — men whose hours have slipped pleasantly by over the correspondence of Horace Walpole, Cowper, and Lamb. As I am writing, I see that Mr. Froude directed his executors to destroy all private letters belonging to him. In his case, this seems an affectation of discretion and of regard for the feelings of others. He is like the miser whose first and only display of charity is seen in the provisions of his will. If a man cannot trust his executors, he can at least

bequeath his correspondence to a public library, with a direction that it shall be kept unpublished till after a long lapse of years.

Of my own modest collection I have no anecdotes to relate. No such luck ever befell me as befell the late James T. Fields, who, in a book picked up at a stall, found inserted an autograph letter of Dr. Samuel Johnson's. To my letters, such as they are, I now beg leave to introduce my readers. I shall venture to act the part of showman, and to treat my audience as I sometimes treat my friends when I have got them safe in my study, and know that politeness will not for a good half-hour allow them to save themselves by flight. There, as I place an autograph before them, I delight to talk about the writer, and, taking down from the shelves one book after another, to read out passages by way of illustration. As I am addressing mainly an American audience, I cannot do better than begin with an extract about America from a letter addressed by Miss Edgeworth, on July 27, 1826, to "Mr. Hunter, 72 St. Paul's Churchyard, London." He was her publisher. Publishers have risen in the world since those days. No author would now venture to deprive them of the title of "Esquire." But Miss Edgeworth belonged to the old landed gentry, and perhaps would not willingly have abandoned class distinctions. She writes: —

THE EDGEWORTH FAMILY

. . . I copy for you a letter I have this morning received from —— Ralstone, one of my American Intelligencers.

"Your great & good friend Sir Walter Scott's last work 'Woodstock' has met with the most brilliant reception among us and I regret much that the large profits of his American publishers cannot be divided with this inimitable writer. — Messrs Carey and Lea purchased the printed sheets from the English publishers for £150 and they were sent out to them as fast as they were printed & before they were bound; they were reprinted here, bound & distributed in most of our principal cities three weeks *before* a complete English copy arrived in this country. The sheets for the last vol. arrived in duplicate on board of three different ships which came to N. York on the same day & within a few hours of each other. They were sent to this city by express & within 23½ hours after their rec^t^ they were printed folded bound & for sale. There were 185 persons employed in the various parts of this expeditious business — The public were equally prompt in purchasing as the enterprising Booksellers were in publishing. The work was for sale at 10 o'clock on Saturday morning — & in the evening of the same day there were short of 1000 copies left on hand. The edition consisted of 9000 copies. Messrs Carey & Lea con-

template publishing another edition of 3 or 4000 copies. There will be Editions published in Boston, N. York & other cities in a short time — We have a great advantage over you in the cheapness of books in this country. 'Woodstock' for example was published in England in 3 vols & sold for thirty-one shillings (7½ Dollars) — it was republished here in 2 vols. & sold for 1½ Dollars or 6s. 9d — Most books are published at the same economical rate & few persons are so poor as to be unable to purchase as many as they desire to read."

Nearly four months earlier than the date of Miss Edgeworth's letter, on April 2, 1826, Scott had recorded in his Diary: "I have the extraordinary and gratifying news that 'Woodstock' is sold for £8228 [about $40,300]; all ready money — a matchless sale for less than three months' work." Miss Edgeworth saw him in Edinburgh in 1823. Lady Scott was surprised that the two novelists had not met in 1803, on Miss Edgeworth's first visit to that capital. "Why," said Sir Walter, with one of his queer looks, "you forget, my dear, Miss Edgeworth was not a lion then, and my mane, you know, was not grown at all." A few months before his death, when his mind was rapidly failing, after speaking of Miss Austen, he continued: "'And there's that Irish

lady, too — but I forget everybody's name now.' — 'Miss Edgeworth.' — 'Ay, Miss Edgeworth; she 's *very* clever, and best in the little touches, too. I 'm sure, in that children's story' (he meant 'Simple Susan'), 'where the little girl parts with her lamb, and the little boy brings it back to her again, there 's nothing for it but just to put down the book and cry.'" Ticknor was shown by Miss Edgeworth a letter from Dumont, — Mirabeau's and Bentham's Dumont, — who had lately met Madame de Staël, fresh from reading Miss Edgeworth's "Tales of Fashionable Life." Dumont reported that she had said of their author, and said perhaps with not a little truth, "Vraiment elle était digne de l'enthousiasme, mais elle se perd dans votre triste utilité." Macaulay once compared these women. "Madame de Staël," he wrote, "was certainly the first woman of her age; Miss Edgeworth, I think, the second; and Miss Austen the third." In the whole of this judgment the present age would not agree. Whatever place is assigned to Madame de Staël, Miss Austen would certainly be generally placed far above Miss Edgeworth.

In a copy of the Memoirs of R. L. Edgeworth by his daughter, which I bought second-hand many years ago, I found the following curious manuscript note: "Maria Edgeworth was plain. Her friend, Rev. H. Crofton, used to say of her

that 'her beauty was turned outside in,' & to her, 'Maria, God has not given you beauty, but He has given you a soul, & that is more than He vouchsafes to all women.' One day she called on Mrs. Crofton, when Sarah Frances, then a very little girl, was in the room; she said, 'Mamma, is it that ugly lady who tells such pretty stories?' 'Hush, hush,' said her mother. Miss Edgeworth laughingly said, 'Now, Fanny, don't try to keep the truth down, for I *am* ugly, & I *do* tell pretty stories.'"

In the handwriting of Miss Austen I have nothing but the following lines: —

"In order to prevent your thus losing the benefit of attending at Church, it has occurred to me that it will not be making an improper use of the time allotted us for public Instruction to turn your thoughts for a few Sundays to this subject."

Underneath these lines is written: —

"This is the handwriting, not the composition of my Aunt Jane Austen, Authoress of 'Pride and Prejudice'

P. Edw^d Austen Leigh."

Such a passage as the above might have been an extract from a sermon preached by Henry Tilney, or Edmund Bertram, or Mr. Collins himself, even though his gracious patroness, Lady Catherine De Burgh, is not mentioned. From

a sermon it has undoubtedly been cut out, for it is but a fragment of a page. How it came to pass that Miss Austen wrote it I can easily imagine. Of her Johnson never could have said, "A woman's preaching is like a dog's walking on his hind legs. It is not done well, but you are surprised to find it done at all." She never ascended a pulpit; but her father was a parson. In my boyhood I spent not a few of my holidays with an old clergyman who lived at Ambleside, at the head of Windermere. There I saw Wordsworth and Miss Martineau. I had not been in my friend's house many days before he asked to see a specimen of my handwriting. He shook his head sadly over it. Had it been legible, he said, he would have got me to copy out sermons. He was too modest to preach his own, and he did not think it decent to take a printed book into the pulpit. It was therefore a happy day for him when he could secure a scribe. In one respect, at all events, either nature or art, perhaps both, favored me more highly than Jane Austen. Her clear hand must have been of great service to her father. She could never have rejoiced, as I did, in writing badly.

I have a long letter by Miss Martineau, dated February 27, 1863. Like Miss Edgeworth's, it deals with America. I have seen her described by a Boston divine as "a foreign carpet-bagger."

He resented her visit to the United States and the part she had played in the anti-slavery movement. Paul at Athens was "a foreign carpet-bagger," who attacked the peculiar institution of the Unknown God. Nevertheless, so far, I believe, he has escaped the reverend gentleman's reproaches.

Miss Martineau writes: —

. . . That Liverpool paper that you sent is among provincial journals the very lowest, — & much what the "Record" is among theological papers. It starts a new idea however. It never occurred to me to make money out of the North. What shall I ask? one thousand or five? But I am afraid they won't give me anything — I am such a hopeless free-trade writer. Of course it is needless; but yet I sh^{d} like just to put you in possession of the fact that I have never made a penny of profit of the American case. I write a certain proportion of the "leaders" in "D. News" on topics of present interest w^{h} I understand: & if it had not been the American business (wh. I do understand more of than any other writer in this country) it w^{d} have been whatever other was uppermost. India is always mine; & 3 or 4 more.

The "interest" to us in that letter of Mackay's that you speak of was in seeing how far even his

impudence would go in relying on the ignorance of English readers. He has the audacity to drop out of mention the class in the South, — wh. is larger than the slave-owners who are only 347,000, — the *hirers* of slaves — & to call *them* "mean whites." The shopkeepers & artisans of the towns are not "mean whites." Those of them who do not own a slave or two *hire* negroes. The "mean whites" in the towns are the mere "loafers," such as hang about all towns. The main body are in the country. If you really have any wish to learn the facts about them you will find in the appendix to Professor Cairnes's new edition the fullest & best authorised account that exists. — Mackay has done one excellent service in that part of his letter, — by a singular heedlessness on his part, & on that of the Times in publishing it. He admits a fact fatal to the Southern case in showing that, by the three-fifths sufferage, every white citizen has more political power than any citizen in the North. This is the true & sufficient answer that has always been given to the Southern cant about being overborne by the tyranny of the North; & it is owing to this anti-republican & thoroughly vicious Southern privilege that the Slave Power has predominated so long. Mackay does not see what he has done in proving the great Northern point for a Southern purpose, — any more than Lawley

sees what a figure he cuts in ridiculing the idea of negro regiments when the negro regiments are already proved, by their achievements, the very best in the field;—with as much valour, as much efficiency of mind & hand as any of the whites, & better discipline. It is really glorious to see what their military capacity is, & how it strikes a sudden light into Northern minds as to the true character & destiny of the people who have been so carefully kept from showing what they c^d^ do. The white officers are in high admiration. . . .

I saw Miss Martineau at an evening party given by the old squire of Ambleside. She sat in state in an armchair, and people came up one by one to talk with her. With the shyness of boyhood I stood afar off, wondering how any one had courage to speak into her long ear-trumpet. "The ear-trumpet," wrote Hawthorne, "seems a sensible part of her, like the antennæ of some insects. If you have any little remark to make, you drop it in, and she helps you to make remarks by this delicate little appeal of the trumpet, as she slightly directs it towards you; and if you have nothing to say, the appeal is not strong enough to embarrass you." He describes her as "a large, robust, elderly woman, and plainly dressed; but withal she has so kind, cheerful, and intelligent a face that she is pleasanter to look at

than most beauties. She is the most continual talker I ever heard; it is really like the babbling of a brook, and very lively and sensible, too." Macaulay, with perhaps some of the jealousy of a rival continual talker, listening one day to the even flow of her voice, broken by nothing but the occasional fall of rubbish in a house hard by which was coming down, whispered to his neighbor: —

> "Here falling houses thunder on your head,
> And here a female atheist talks you dead."

She had lately published those Letters to Mr. Atkinson which provoked some wit to say, "Miss Martineau's creed is one of the briefest, — there is no God, and Mr. Atkinson is his prophet." In 1837, Carlyle, writing of her, said: "She pleased us far beyond expectation. She is very intelligent-looking, really of pleasant countenance, was full of talk, though, unhappily, deaf almost as a post." Nine years later it was in a very different strain that he wrote: "Miss Martineau was here and is gone; broken into utter wearisomeness, a mind reduced to three elements: Imbecility Dogmatism, and Unlimited Hope. I never in my life was more heartily bored with any creature."

Carlyle was a harsh judge when his fellow writers stood at his bar. Of Lamb, "the frolic and the gentle," he wrote: "Insuperable proclivity to gin in poor old Lamb. His talk contemptibly

small, indicating wondrous ignorance and shallowness, even when it was serious and good-mannered, which it seldom was; usually ill-mannered (to a degree), screwed into frosty artificialities, ghastly make-believe of wit. He was cockney to the marrow." Even in his cups Lamb did not lose his enjoyment of perfect verse. "Both tipsy and sober," wrote H. C. Robinson to Landor, "he is ever muttering Rose Aylmer."

Of Lamb I have the following autograph. It bears no date, but the postmark shows that it was written in 1814.

SIR, — Your explanation is perfectly pleasant to me, and I accede to your proposal most willingly.

As I began with the beginning of this month, I will if you please call upon you for *your part of the engagement* (supposing I shall have performed mine) on the 1st of March next, & thence forward if it suit you quarterly — You will occasionally wink at BRISKETS & VEINY PIECES.

Your Obt Svt

C. LAMB.

Saturday.
J. SCOTT, Esq.,
3 Maida Place, Edgware road.

Briskets and veiny pieces, as a notable housewife informs me, are inferior portions of meat.

Sir,

Your explanation is perfectly pleasant to me,
and I accede to your proposal most willingly.
As I began with the beginning of this month

Lamb, who had undertaken to write for "The Champion," warns the editor, in the language of the market, that his contributions will not always be of prime equality. Eleven years later he wrote to one of his friends: "Why did poor Scott die? There was comfort in writing with such associates as were his little band of scribblers: some gone away, some affronted away, and I am left as the solitary widow looking for watercresses." He thus mentions him in another letter: "Patmore is a very hearty, friendly fellow, and was poor John Scott's second, as I will be yours, when you want one. May you never be mine." Scott fell in a duel. He met his death, says Talfourd, "almost by lamentable accident, in the uncertain glimmer of moonlight, from the hand of one who went out resolved not to harm him." In the index to Canon Ainger's edition of "Lamb's Letters" there is a strange confounding of the persons under the article John Scott. There are mixed up in one whole, John Scott of Amwell, the Quaker poet, who hated

> "That drum's discordant sound,
> Which goes parading round and round;"

Lord Nelson's secretary, whose name also was Scott, killed by his master's side at Trafalgar; and John Scott the editor, who, to add to the confusion, having been shot by Mr. Christis, is stated to have fallen in a duel with Lockhart.

From Mr. Ruskin I have the following letter, written to me eleven years ago, when I was wintering at San Remo.

BRANTWOOD. CONISTON. LANCASHIRE,
7th Dec —83.

MY DEAR SIR, — I 've just time to thank you, by this post — but please let me know if your address is permanent

— I had totally forgot the passage! — but I don't think the young generation will teach *me* much about clouds! It is a curious feeling in old age — Homer has his word about that, too, — has n't he? — that nobody knows one's own sinews Ever gratefully yrs

J. RUSKIN.

Why Mr. Ruskin felt so grateful to a stranger is explained by the following passage in his first lecture on "The Storm Cloud of the Nineteenth Century:" —

"When, in the close of my lecture on landscape, last year, at Oxford, I spoke of stationary clouds as distinguished from passing ones, some blockheads wrote to the papers to say that clouds never were stationary. Those foolish letters were so far useful in causing a friend to write me the pretty one I am about to read to you, quoting

Brantwood,
Coniston. Lancashire

14th Dec. 83

My dear Sir

I've just time to thank you. by this post — but please let me know if your address is permanent — I had totally forgot the passage! — but I doubt much the young generation will teach me much about Gods! — It is a curious feeling in old age — Homer has his word about that too, — had'nt he? — that nobody knows one's old friends

Ever gratefully yrs
J Ruskin

a passage about clouds in Homer which I had myself never noticed, though perhaps the most beautiful of its kind in the Iliad. In the fifth book, after the truce is broken, and the aggressor Trojans are rushing to the onset in a tumult of clamor and charge, Homer says that the Greeks, abiding them, 'stood like clouds.' My correspondent, giving the passage, writes as follows: —

"'SIR, — Last winter, when I was at Ajaccio, I was one day reading Homer by the open window, and came upon the lines —

Ἀλλ' ἔμενον, νεφέλῃσιν ἐοικότες ἄς τε Κρονίων
Νηνεμίης ἔστησεν ἐπ' ἀκροπόλοισιν ὄρεσσιν,
Ἀτρέμας, ὄφρ' εὖδῃσι μένος Βορέαο καὶ ἄλλων
Ζαχρειῶν ἀνέμων, οἵτε νέφεα σκιόεντα
Πνοιῇσιν λιγυρῇσι διασκιδνᾶσιν ἀέντες·
Ὣς Δαναοὶ Τρῶας μένον ἔμπεδον, οὐδ' ἐφέβοντο.

"But they stood, like the clouds which the son of Kronos stablishes in calm upon the mountains, motionless, when the rage of the north and of all the fiery winds is asleep."[1] As I finished these lines, I raised my eyes, and, looking across the gulf, saw a long line of clouds resting on the top of the hills. The day was windless, and there they stayed, hour after hour, without any stir or motion. I remember how much I was delighted at the time, and have often since that day thought on the beauty and the truthfulness of Homer's simile.

[1] This is Mr. Ruskin's version of Homer's lines, not mine.

"'Perhaps this little fact may interest you, at a time when you are attacked for your description of clouds.

"'I am, sir, yours faithfully,
G. B. HILL.'"

The following letter, also by Mr. Ruskin, was written at a much earlier date than the first quoted, about the year 1858:—

DEAR ——: Would you be so very kind as to write down for me the titles in English of those illustrated works by Richter, with the place where you got them — so that I can send the same to Printers, in my catalogue of works to be studied at the end of my book for beginners.

Ever affectionately yours
J. RUSKIN.

Tell Jones his glass won't quite do. I want to talk to him about it but can't find a day, — but he ought to get a bit of pure 13th century glass *done*, and put beside his; then he would feel what is wanted I fancy, namely greater grace in the interlacing forms and more distinctness in the figures as emergent from ground.

"Jones" is our great painter, Sir Edward Burne-Jones. I should not have given his name, had I not received his permission. He has no

doubt, he sends me word, the criticism was entirely just, but no one had the hardihood to tell him of it, so he has never heard it till now. One hot June morning, thirty-seven years ago, I watched him painting a cluster of crown lilies in the garden of Red Lion Square. It was, I believe, the first time that he worked in oils.

Judge Maule, one of the wittiest men that ever sat on the bench, irritated by the conceit of a young barrister who, with an air of superiority, was stating his case in the most confusing manner, exclaimed: "Sir, in this court counsel usually follow some order in their statement of facts: some follow the chronological order, but as for you, sir, you had better keep to the order of the alphabet." In the selection of my autographs I am disregarding both chronology and the alphabet, and am taking my readers backwards and forwards as I please. Neither shall I pay much regard to subjects, but shall pass lightly from one to the other. From Mr. Ruskin and thirteenth-century painted glass let us turn to that venerable mass of vast legal learning and Tory obstinacy which was embodied in Lord Chancellor Eldon. His letter is addressed to his brother-in-law, Mr. Alderman Burdon, Newcastle-on-Tyne. Above the address is written the date, "London, March Fifteenth, 1815," and in the left-hand corner, "Eldon." By writing the date and his name on

the cover the Chancellor franked the letter, — sent it through the post free of charge. This privilege, which was enjoyed by the members of both Houses of Parliament, was abolished, in 1840, on the introduction of penny postage.

H[OUSE] OF L[DS] [LORDS]
Wednesday Morning.

DEAR SIR, — I thank you for your kind Letter. We are all safe & well. At present Tranquillity *seems* to be restored — Whether the Mob only sleep, or have ceased to exist, seems very uncertain. I hope I did not disgrace my Situation as a Magistrate, when I came into Contact with the Rioters: and I hope so the rather, because I am satisfied that, if I did not act as stoutly as the Law would authorise me to act, my Example might have done much Mischief.

Yrs aff[ly]
ELDON.

Nothing authentic at this hour from France.
11 o'clock Wed[y]. Morng.

The rioters had risen against an increase in the tax on corn. The misery of the people was already great, and once more legislation was to make it still greater. The mob had torn up the iron railings in the front of Lord Eldon's house in Bedford Square, and, using them as crowbars, had forced an entrance. He and his family

escaped by a back door into the garden of the British Museum. There they found a guard of a corporal and four privates. The story shall go on in the Chancellor's words: "I proposed to the corporal that we should proceed out of my study into the great room which adjoins it, and from that into the dining-room; and, the mob being in the hall and a little adjoining room, we should be able to surprise and secure them. He was a Scotchman, and said: 'We are not strong enough to keep them in, but with good management we may drive them out. I won't let my men put powder and ball into their muskets, but they shall fix their bayonets, and if you will go with me, and, when we get out of this study into the hall, will give me your orders to charge them with the bayonets, I will, and my men shall obey those orders; but we must make the best appearance we can, and as there are only four soldiers, they must follow one by one, and we must so manage the matter that the mob may suppose that there will be no end of them that are coming.' Accordingly we so advanced, and the corporal calling out to his soldiers to come in language tending to make it believed that they were numerous, the mob fled with great precipitation. The front door being demolished, two soldiers guarded the entrance, crossing their muskets. The mob held a consultation at the top

of Keppel Street, whether they should attack the house again; but, conceiving the military corps inside to be strong, they gave it up. I brought into the house by their collars two of the mob, and told them they would be hanged. One of them bid me look to myself, and told me that the people were much more likely to hang me than I was to procure any of them to be hanged. They were sent before a justice of the peace; but the soldiers said they would do their duty as soldiers, but they would not be witnesses."

"My poor excellent corporal and commander," adds Lord Eldon, "was shot at Waterloo." Across France Napoleon, escaped from Elba, was hurrying towards Paris and the imperial crown. What was the life of one poor Scotchman to him? Five days before the date of the letter, on March 10, Romilly recorded: "As I was coming out of the Court of Chancery to-day I was told that intelligence had just arrived that Bonaparte had landed in the south of France on the 1st or 2d of this month, and was marching towards Grenoble. I gave no credit to the information, but I find it is but too true. It is in everybody's mouth, and has filled every one with consternation." It is to this dreadful rumor that the postscript of Lord Eldon's letter refers.

The Chancellor's eldest brother, William Scott, under the title of Lord Stowell, is famous as the

great judge of the High Court of Admiralty. Strong as the heads of the two brothers were for law, scarcely less strong were they for port wine. When some one asked Lord Eldon what exercise his brother took, "None that I know of," he replied, "except the exercise of eating and drinking." In spite of hard work and the bottle they both outlived by many years the Psalmist's limit of life. The president of an Oxford college told me that his father, a clergyman of the Church of England, once took the chair at a dinner given by one of the London companies, at which Lord Eldon was the chief guest. When the table had been cleared, the old man, who was past eighty, said to his host, "I always like to know how I am going on with my port, so you must let me have a bottle to myself which shall not circulate. I have given you two pieces of preferment in the Church; so you must now show your gratitude by filling my glass for me." Before long the old fellow remarked, "You are not showing your gratitude; you are leaving my glass empty." When he had finished his two bottles he said, "When I was Chancellor and hard-worked I often drank three bottles at a sitting, and now and then four." Once he and Chief Justice Kenyon came to a political meeting at the Duke of Wellington's house, both drunk. They were not, however, without excuse; their loyalty had

overcome them at the table of one of the royal dukes which they had just left. It was remarked that while the Chief Justice "talked exceeding nonsense," the ex-Chancellor talked sense. Drunk or sober, steady on their legs or reeling, both of these noblemen were always justly looked upon as pillars of the Church.

These reminiscences of great men are leading me too far astray. I will now give William Scott's letter: —

My dear Sir, — The K. is better. It is fit it should be known that the Increase of his Malady the other Day was produced by the following circumstances — He was perfectly collected & composed on Thursday Morning; and expressed a great desire to settle the Matter of breaking up the Establishment of the deceased P. Amelia. He was so well that the Physicians saw no objection to it, particularly as He said that if the Matter was once off His Mind, He shd feel Himself much relieved. He went through the whole detail in the most accurate manner, settling all the Pensions, Allotments & Allowances with the utmost propriety correcting the Mistakes of other Persons concerned and referring most minutely to former conversations upon it — But unfortunately the business lasted three hours; It fatigued Him, and the fatigue brought on rest-

LORD STOWELL AND LORD ELDON

lessness & irritation — Thank God He is now recovering from it.

I am, dear Sir,
very faithfully yours,
W. SCOTT.

LONDON, November nineteenth, 1810
Worshipful THOMAS BURDON Esq.
Mayor of Newcastle on Tyne.

George III.'s mind never recovered from the shock given it by the death of his favorite daughter. He lived ten years longer, bereft of that reason which, when it had been in force, had worked mankind such dreadful wrong. The princess died on November 2. Miss Burney thus describes her third birthday, kept at Windsor on August 7, 1786: —

"The manner of keeping the birthdays here is very simple. All the Royal Family are new-dressed; so — at least so they appear — are all their attendants. [As George III. had fifteen children, there were, with his birthday and the Queen's, seventeen birthdays to keep every year, and seventeen new suits required.] The dinners and deserts are unusually sumptuous. . . . If the weather is fine all the family walk upon the terrace, which is crowded with people of distinction. It was really a mighty pretty procession. The little Princess, just turned of three years old, in a robe-coat covered with fine muslin, a dressed

close cap, white gloves, and a fan, walked on alone and first, highly delighted in the parade, and turning from side to side to see everybody as she passed; for all the terracers stand up against the walls to make a clear passage for the Royal Family, the moment they come in sight."

II

THE following letter I received from the late Astronomer Royal, Sir G. B. Airy, when I was writing the Life of my uncle, Sir Rowland Hill. A few years ago, an American gentleman, to whom I was showing Oxford, spoke of Sir Rowland Hill as if he had not only reformed the postal system of the world, but had also, by way of Sabbath day rest, cracked a good many jokes in the pulpit. When I pointed out to him the strange confusion he was making, he replied, "Down in Illinois we always think the postal reformer and the great pulpit humorist one and the same man." The index-maker of the "Early Letters of Thomas Carlyle" has fallen into the same blunder. Carlyle, writing of the Rev. Edward Irving, says, "Unless he looks to it, he bids fair for becoming a kind of theological braggadocio, an enlarged edition of the Rev. Rowland Hill." In the index this passage is referred to under "Hill, Sir Rowland." Some of the passages in Sir G. B. Airy's letter are on a subject too deep both for my understanding and for the columns of a magazine. These I omit. Lord Macaulay's "astounding blunder"

is to be found in his "History of England" (vol. v. p. 96 of the original edition), where he says, "In America the Spanish territories spread from the equator northward and southward through all the signs of the Zodiac far into the temperate zone." The "lady" was Mrs. Oliphant, "whose admirable stories," wrote Sir Rowland Hill, "I never miss reading." She in "White-Ladies" represents "a new moon making her way upwards in the pale sky."

ROYAL OBSERVATORY, GREENWICH,
LONDON S. E., 1879, November 2.

DEAR SIR, — I have spent a Sunday morning on the paper containing the Astronomical parts of Sir Rowland Hill's Biography. And I have been much interested in it. . . . I remember the 1811 Comet well. I am surprised that R. H. does not mention the 1807 Comet; I (then in my 7th year) saw it; my father tied a telescope into some pales to show it to me. . . .

Lord Macaulay's blunder is astounding. But you must pardon the lady. Until there is an Academy for Lunarian appearances, ladies, painters, and poets will claim the privilege "quidlibet audendi." Perhaps I may mention the following. A real astronomer had made a picture containing the moon, without any leading stars. On looking at it I said, "This drawing must have been made about the middle of August, between

3^h and 4^h in the morning." And this proved strictly true. My friend was much surprised at my relying on[1] the accuracy of his lunar picture. . . .

I am, dear Sir,
Faithfully yours,
G. B. AIRY.

The great comet of 1811 Harriet Martineau, "then," as she tells us, "nine years old, and with remarkably good eyes," could not see, apparently from a strange kind of nervous excitement. "Night after night," she records, "the whole family of us went up to the long windows at the top of my father's warehouse; and the exclamations on all hands about the comet perfectly exasperated me, — because I could not see it! 'Why, there it is!' 'It is as big as a saucer.' 'It is as big as a cheese-plate.' 'Nonsense; you might as well pretend not to see the moon.' Such were the mortifying comments on my grudging admission that I could not see the comet. And I never did see it."

My Life of Sir Rowland Hill, with which was incorporated his History of Penny Postage, — a posthumous publication, — I dedicated to Mr. Gladstone, a statesman for whom he had always entertained a feeling of great respect and strong

[1] Sir G. B Airy had first written "at my recognition of."

affection. I received the following letter in acknowledgment: —

10 DOWNING STREET, WHITEHALL,
Dec. 11, 1880.

MY DEAR SIR, — Upon receiving your kind gift, which I highly value, I was sanguine enough to begin the perusal of the Life, in the hope of associating with my thanks some evidence that your work had not been unappreciated. I was very greatly interested in the account of the family. . . . But the urgent circumstances of the present winter have arrested my progress for the time. . . .

Your Uncle was unhappy in the original association of his measure with a state of chronic deficiency for which he was in no way responsible; but on the other hand happy beyond almost all other great projectors in the rapidity with which his plans informed and spread throughout the world, under his eyes.

I remain, my dear Sir,
Faithfully yours,
W. E. GLADSTONE.

G. B. HILL, Esq.

Matthew Arnold, as all who are acquainted with his prose writings know to their cost, was as strong on the unlawfulness of a widower's marriage with his deceased wife's sister as Dr.

10. Downing Street.
Whitehall.
Dec. 11. 20

My dear Sir

Upon receiving your kind gift, which I highly value I was sanguine enough to begin the perusal of the life, in the hope of associating with my thanks some evidence that your works had not been unappreciated. I was very greatly interested in the account of the family. But

Your Uncle was unhappy in the original association of his measures with a state of chronic deficiency for which he was in no way responsible. But on the other hand happy beyond almost all other great projectors in the rapidity with which his plans ripened, and spread throughout the world, under his eyes. I remain

my dear Sir

Faithfully yours

G. B. Hill

W E Gladstone

Primrose was on the monogamy of priests. While the worthy vicar never wearies us by insistence on his great doctrine, Mr. Arnold sometimes bores even those who are of his own way of thinking by his iteration, and now and then, by his want of taste, offends those whose opinions he attacks. In the following correspondence, however, he is seen in that pleasant, gentle light which he so well knew how to diffuse around him: —

To MATTHEW ARNOLD, ESQ.:

MY DEAR SIR, — I hope you will excuse this letter's liberty and abruptness. Weak sight makes writing painful, but a sense of duty compels the effort. You are a powerful public teacher, and must feel how important it is that your teaching should be sound. On one point on which I have a strong personal feeling I deem it otherwise. Again and again you have thrown ridicule on those who seek to remove the prohibition on marrying a deceased wife's sister. Now that prohibition has kept me a widower nearly forty years, the alternative having been to act unjustly to my sister-in-law and to my children, mutually and strongly attached. In effect, out of the eighty years of my life I have passed but eight in the married state, and I cannot but thank and honour those who would have released

me and many more from a very painful and most unprofitable dilemma.

Pray forgive me for thus writing, and believe me,

Ever yours sincerely,

* * * * *

To —— —— Esq.:

Wesleyan Training College,
Westminster S. W., December 19th, 1878.

My dear Sir, — I have to thank you for your letter, and I assure you I was both interested and touched in reading it. I need not remind you that a rule may operate severely in individual cases, and yet may be for the general advantage. For instance, I can conceive a case in which the prohibition to marry one's niece (a marriage permitted in Protestant Germany) may be felt to press hardly; yet I have no doubt at all that such a prohibition is for the general advantage. Still, though I may continue to differ from you on the main point in question, I am not the less grieved to have said anything to give pain to one for whom I feel — if you will allow me to say so — such sincere esteem and regard as yourself.

Believe me, dear Mr. ——
Most truly yours,
Matthew Arnold.

My readers must not infer from the address of this letter that Matthew Arnold, who was never weary of scoffing at the Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant Religion, lived in the Wesleyan Training College. It was, no doubt, as an inspector of schools that he was visiting it. While the students were writing their answers to the questions he had set them, he would fill up the time by his private correspondence. Against his confident belief on this marriage question it is interesting to set the no less confident belief on the same question of a brother poet, a man of vast learning and a strong Churchman. "Has it never occurred to you," wrote Robert Southey, "that this law is an abominable relic of ecclesiastical tyranny? Of all second marriages, I have no hesitation in saying that these are the most natural and the most suitable."

Few among my autographs do I value more highly than the following letter from Sir Thomas Browne to the antiquary Dugdale, the author of the "Monasticon." Browne, Johnson, and Blackstone are the great boasts of Pembroke College, Oxford, in which I passed nearly four years of my student life. By the side of these three great luminaries, her other sons, such as Shenstone and Whitefield, are stars of small magnitude. "Sir Thomas Browne," writes Johnson, "was the

first man of eminence graduated from the new college, to which the zeal or gratitude of those that love it most can wish little better than that it may long proceed as it began." De Quincey, in his Essay on Rhetoric, speaks of him as "deep, tranquil and majestic as Milton." Johnson, however, described his style as "indeed a tissue of many languages." Nevertheless he sometimes imitated it. When he tells how Frederick the Great "commanded one of his Titanian retinue to marry a tall woman that they might propagate procerity," Boswell accuses him of "indulging his *Brownism*." The "defect of faith" with which Browne had been charged, Johnson victoriously repels. "Nor," he writes, "can contempt of the positive and ritual parts of religion be imputed to him who doubts whether a good man would refuse a poisoned eucharist, and 'who would violate his own arm rather than a church.'" In his Dictionary, the great lexicographer, quoting this passage, defines "violate" "to injure by irreverence." In the year in which Browne wrote his letter to Dugdale he took unto himself a wife. The marriage was a happy one, even though he had lately declared in his "Religio Medici" that "the whole world was made for man, but only the twelfth part of man for woman," and that "man is the whole world, but woman only the rib or crooked part of man."

With such doctrines as these, he is not likely to be held in high esteem in Radcliffe College.

HONORD SIR, — Though somewhat late I returne you most heartie thancks for your excellent booke; For wh the whole nation oweth you soe many acknowlegdments. I thinck myself exceeding happy to have the libertie of communication with a person of so approoued worth ingenuitie knowledge & integritie as yourself. I should bee restlesse to do you service if it were possibly in my power, & I beseech you to retaine a sensible apprehension of my earnest desires & true affection unto you. I would not omitt to enclose this wh somewhat concerneth the discourse of the fennes of wh I am very glad to learne the world shall not long languish in expectation. worthy Sir I am

Your most affectionat friend
servant & honorer
THO. BROWNE.

Sept xi,
NORWICH.

To my worthy & truly
honord friend Mr Dugdale
to bee left at the
Heralds office
London.

[Indorsed, probably by Dugdale.]

"*Dr Browne* of Norwich his Letter upon receipt of the second volume of the *Monasticon*

Sept xiᵗʰ 1661."

Among Browne's posthumous pieces is included "Answers to Sir William Dugdale's Enquiries about the Fens."

On July 11, 1853, Macaulay recorded in his Diary: "Read Haydon's Memoirs. Haydon was exactly the vulgar idea of a man of genius. He had all the morbid peculiarities which are supposed by fools to belong to intellectual superiority, — eccentricity, jealousy, caprice, infinite disdain for other men; and yet he was as poor, commonplace a creature as any in the world. He painted signs, and gave himself more airs than if he had painted the Cartoons. Whether you struck him or stroked him, starved him or fed him, he snapped at your hand in just the same way. He would beg you in piteous accents to buy an acre and a half of canvas that he had spoiled. Some good-natured Lord asks the price. Haydon demands a hundred guineas. His Lordship gives the money out of mere charity, and is rewarded by some such entry as this in Haydon's journal: 'A hundred guineas, and for such a work! I expected that for very shame he would have made it a thousand. But he is a mean, sordid wretch.' In the mean time the purchaser is looking out for the most retired spot in his house to hide the huge daub which he has bought for ten times its value out of mere compassion." There is somewhere in America,

unless the flames have claimed their own, Haydon's "great picture" of Christ's entry into Jerusalem. It was exhibited in London in 1820; if we can trust the painter's account, more than fifteen hundred pounds were taken in shillings at the door. It is said that he estimated that his genius deserved three thousand pounds a year, and that at the rate of three thousand pounds a year he had a right to live, whatever income he made. The base tradesmen with whom he dealt, indifferent to genius and its rights, not getting their accounts settled, twice threw him into a debtors' prison. That he would condescend to receive small payments is shown by the following letter, addressed to my mother's cousin, Mr. Tilt, a London publisher, for whom he seems to have been engraving some plates: —

DEAR SIR, — Cash & activity are the sinews of War — if you proceed as you began — You are the man.

I send you 12

To 12 Num. — £2. 5

The rest as soon as dry; the bearer is trustworthy

Yours &c

B R HAYDON

Ju. 7, 1835.

MR TILT Fleet St.

The following letter from Professor Jowett, the famous Master of Balliol College, was written when I was working at my edition of Boswell. It was by the Clarendon Press — the press and publishing house of the University of Oxford — that the book was brought out. This great establishment was founded with the money made by the sale of Clarendon's "History of the Great Rebellion." Soon after the middle of last century it had sunk into the neglect that overwhelmed learning in the university. In a curious manuscript volume in the possession of the Delegates of the Press it is stated that in 1764 "the under-servants and pressmen were a set of idle, drunken men, and the house appeared more like an ale-house than a printing-room." Of the men who did most to give it fresh life, Sir William Blackstone stands among the first. It has long been famous for the beauty and excellence of its printing. Americans who come to Oxford commonly pay a visit, I am told, to the little shop in the High Street where its publications are sold, so that they may carry away a memorial of the place. A family Bible, I learn, is what they almost always select, — an admirable choice, no doubt, in itself, but not one which brings any satisfaction to authors. They should procure also a specimen of that great division of the Clarendon Press which has always been known as the

Monsieur Clarendon Press.

à Oxford

Angleterre

Le Président de la République
et Madame Carnot prient
Monsieur Clarendon Ress
Grand Prix (Cl. 9)
de leur faire l'honneur de venir passer
la Soirée au Palais de l'Elysée
le Jeudi 17 Octobre à 9 heures et ½

ON DANSERA.

Carte personnelle à remettre en entrant.

Learned Side; the wing of the printing-house, that is to say, in which everything is printed which is not a Bible, a prayer-book, or a hymn-book. The general excellence of the workmanship was attested by the Grand Prix which was awarded to the Press at the last great Exhibition in Paris. Nay, even with this distinction the stream of honors did not cease to flow, as is shown by the following invitation: —

"Le Président de la République et Madame Carnot prient Monsieur Clarendon Press Grand Prix (Cl. 9) de leur faire l'honneur de venir passer la Soirée au Palais de l'Elysée le Jeudi, 17 Octobre, à 9 heures et ½.

"On Dansera.

"*Carte personelle à remettre en entrant.*

"MONSIEUR CLARENDON PRESS,
à Oxford, Angleterre."

The Press is governed by a board of university men, professors, tutors, and fellows of colleges, known as the Delegates, — a close corporation; for every vacancy is filled by the votes of the survivors. The vice-chancellor of the university, during his four years of office, is chairman of the board. It was fortunate for me that so sound and ardent a Johnsonian as the Master of Balliol College held this post when I sent in my proposal for a new edition of Boswell. His letter was addressed to Professor Price, at that time

secretary of the Press, now Master of Pembroke College.

DEAR PROFESSOR PRICE, — Will you tell Dr. Birkbeck Hill that I shall be very happy to read his notes to the life of Boswell, if he thinks I can be of any use to him.

My impression of Boswell is that he was a great genius, which is the most natural explanation of his having written a great book, but weak and vainglorious like Goldsmith, and also a rake and a sot unlike Goldsmith, and always sinning and always repenting, which has a most comical effect. The letters to the Revd Mr. Temple, the Bishop of Exeter's Grandfather, though they are chiefly a chronicle of rather low amours, are as well and graphically written as the life of Johnson. Macaulay's paradox "that he wrote a good book because he was a great fool," and Carlyle's correction "that he wrote a good book in spite of being a great fool," almost equally miss the mark: the real truth is that he wrote a good book because he was an extraordinary genius of a peculiar kind, gifted with the greatest love of truth and the skill to express it where it would have been impossible to others; also with the strongest power of attaching himself to others, and drawing them out by sympathy; and he was the most social of human beings, and the greatest lover of human life in every variety of form.

I have been reading lately a book which no doubt Dr Hill knows well: Hawkins' Life of Johnson, well worth reading though prolix. Mrs Piozzi's diary throws an entirely new light on the family of Thrale. There is also a book about Johnson published by a Dr Campbell, or rather professing to be written by him and published about 30 years ago in N. S. Wales. It contains accounts of Conversations with Johnson — which I believe to be forgeries, though I remember Lord Macaulay reproving me for doubting them. The book was reviewed in the "Edinburgh" about 28 or 30 years ago, and would be worth looking up for a new life of Boswell. My reason for thinking it a forgery is that it agrees too much with Boswell.

I remain,

Yours ever,

B. Jowett.

Oxford, Dec. 3rd [1882].

The Master had undertaken a much heavier task than he had dreamed of when he offered to read my notes. In those years he was the busiest man in the university, vice-chancellor, master, professor, and author all rolled into one. After he had seen a few of the proof-sheets he confessed that he was satisfied. To him I dedicated my edition of the Life of Johnson. I had to some extent anticipated his view of Boswell's character

in a work published a few years earlier under the title, "Dr. Johnson: His Friends and his Critics." How hard I labored at that little book, for it was my first, and what high hopes I formed! A year passed away, when one morning I received from my publishers, not a check, but a bill for the few copies I had given away to my friends. My ardor for giving away copies of my various works has ever since remained damped, if not indeed quenched. I still think I was ill used by the world, for who with a calm mind can see his first-born slighted? Let no one suspect me of any greater sin than vanity in thus mentioning my book. It is out of print, and can be found only at second-hand stalls. I do not know that a much better fate befell Boswell's Letters to the Rev. Mr. Temple. They have been published nearly forty years, and though they deserve all the praise the Master of Balliol bestowed on them, they have seen no second edition. The "accounts of conversation," which he believed to be forgeries, are, I think, genuine. It is indeed a suspicious circumstance that the author puts a profane expression into Johnson's mouth. Beyond all manner of doubt it was never uttered. Campbell, though a doctor of divinity and a parson, was also an Irishman, and therefore likely enough to have been so free in the use of oaths himself as, without any sense of incongruity or

impropriety, to intersperse them wherever a due regard to emphasis seemed to require it. The late Dr. Findlater, the learned editor of Chambers's Encyclopædia, gave me an instance of this kind of reporting. One day, in company with a most respectable clergyman of the Church of England, a man as highly starched as his own white tie, he went fishing on a loch near Edinburgh. They had two men to row their boat. One of them, a profane fellow, could not open his mouth without letting fly an oath. The clergyman, greatly shocked, rebuked him more than once. On their return to the inn, the second boatman, without any sense of humor, but with a certain touch of Herodotus's manner of reporting a conversation, told the landlord that his mate had sworn so much that at last the English minister had cried out that he would be d— to h— if he would stand it any longer.

I received a second communication from the Master of Balliol a year later, from which I extract the following acute piece of criticism. The original letter I have had the pleasure to add to the great Johnsonian collection of my friend Mr. R. B. Adam, of Buffalo.

"It is a curious question whether Boswell has unconsciously misrepresented Johnson in any respect. I think, judging from the materials which are supplied chiefly by himself, that in one respect

he has — he has represented him more as a sage and philosopher in his conduct as well as his conversation than he really was, and less as a rollicking 'King of Society.' The gravity of Johnson's own writings tends to confirm this, as I suspect, erroneous impression. His religion was fitful and intermittent, and when once the ice was broken he enjoyed Jack Wilkes, though he refused to shake hands with Hume. I was much struck by a remark of Sir John Hawkins (excuse me if I have mentioned this to you before): 'He was the most humorous man I ever knew.' I shall be most happy to talk about the subject when you return to England; *ἐμοὶ περὶ Σωκράτους εἰπεῖν τε καὶ ἀκοῦσαι ἀεὶ ἥδιστον.*"[1]

The passage in Hawkins to which the Master referred is as follows: "In the talent of humour there hardly ever was Johnson's equal, except perhaps among the old comedians." I shall not, in this article, include the autograph which I possess of the great man, for I have already printed it among his Letters. I have in my collection the following curious cutting from a London newspaper, published a day or two after his body was laid to rest in Westminster Abbey: —

"There were present at the ill-performed ser-

[1] "For to me there is no greater pleasure than to have Socrates brought to my recollection; whether I speak myself, or hear another speak of him."

vice of yesterday not a single Bishop, and not six Curates. — Not one titled individual of our own country, or of the numerous foreigners amongst us. — No official deputations from our Universities or establishments of science. — Scarcely any of the learned professions. — Not even the Choir, and but four of the Chapter of the Cathedral which was honoured with his interment. — The Dean did not make one of those four.

"The only persons who understood themselves and their condition enough to attend as mourners on this sad solemnity were about thirty individuals, distinguished purely by science, sentiment and taste."

Among the mourners were Reynolds and Burke. What was the whole bench of bishops, or a dozen mourning-coaches full of "titled individuals," weighed against either of them?

Shenstone, to whom I will next introduce my readers, was one of "that nest of singing-birds" who last century gave renown to Pembroke College. He died a bachelor; yet he must have known what love was when he wrote so prettily:

> "She gazed as I slowly withdrew;
> My path I could hardly discern;
> So sweetly she bade me adieu,
> I thought that she bade me return."

It was as a melancholy bachelor that he knew so well how to sing the praises of an inn: —

"Whoe'er has travell'd life's dull round,
Where'er his stages may have been,
May sigh to think he still has found
The warmest welcome at an inn."

His letter, which bears no address, is as follows: —

Sunday 23d Sept. 1759.

My Compⁿ Mr Prattenton sent hither last night to request a Few Fish, of any sort, for his Father's Feast (who is Bailiff elect) on Thursday week — I am as unwilling to excuse myself as I am unable to oblige him, from any Pool of mine at the Leasowes — Could Mr Hylton or Mr Smith of Lapall contrive any means of procuring a good handsome dish, which I should be very glad to send him, at any reasonable expence? I am to let him know this afternoon.

I forgot to acquaint Mr Hylton yt his method of coloring my grove &c. is to finish everything yt requires *one* Color, *first;* then every thing of another, &c. By this means he will be able to compleat *five* while he does *one* ye other way — 'T is ye grand arcanum in all manufactures. — Did I give Mr Hylton *all* my Kingfishers? For upon examining my Drawer I can find *none* — I should be glad of a middlin Dose of Rhubarb & Crem. Tartar by the Bearer.

WILL: SHENSTONE.

Mr Hodgetts & his Sister here — For what various uses, in the Name of Wonder, is ye Implement intended, that came Last Night?

4 o'clock Afternoon — Admiral Smith & a Mr Wood in one Chaise, Mr Harris & Miss Milward in another — Left me about 3 — Lord Stanford's Servants &c. The Day exquisitely fine.

The Leasowes, — Shenstone's pretty place in Worcestershire, — though it covered but a few acres of ground, nevertheless, by the landscape-gardening with which he adorned it, swallowed up most of his fortune. No sooner did he come into possession of the property than "he began to point his prospects, to diversify his surface, to entangle his walks, and to wind his waters; which he did with such judgment and such fancy as made his little domain the envy of the great, and the admiration of the skilful; a place to be visited by travellers and copied by designers." It long remained a show place. I have heard my father say that, in his boyhood, he and his schoolfellows, on a holiday, would walk over to see it all the way from a town many miles off. The bailiff-elect — the office corresponded to that of mayor — probably belonged to Hales-Owen, the neighboring market town. In its grammar school Shenstone was educated, and in its churchyard he found his last resting-place. The poet's equanimity must have been greatly disturbed by the request for fish. "His pleasure was all in his eye; he valued what he valued merely for its

looks; nothing raised his indignation more than to ask if there were any fish in his water."

Some years ago, in the course of my reading I came across the following passage in Mrs. Piozzi's "Journey through Italy:" "I have no roses here [at Florence] equal to those at Lichfield, where on one tree I recollect counting eighty-four within your reach; it grew against the house of Dr. Darwin." It raised in my mind so pleasant a picture of the home of the poet who sang of the "Loves of the Plants" that I sent a copy to the great naturalist, Charles Darwin, who was, I knew, writing Erasmus Darwin's Life. He replied: —

DOWN, BECKENHAM, KENT,
July 1st.

DEAR SIR, — I am much obliged to you for your kindness in writing to me. My notice of the life of my grandfather will be very short, and I doubt whether I shall go into such detail as to justify my using the little fact communicated by you. Yours faithfully & obliged,

CH. DARWIN.

When we reflect on the place Darwin holds in the realm of science, — a place which no one has held since Newton died, — the two following entries have a certain air of strangeness about them. Macaulay recorded in his diary on July

17, 1856, "In the evening, Darwin, a geologist and traveller, came to dinner" (at Lord Stanhope's). Little did Macaulay suspect that one greater than Macaulay was there. There is this to be said by way of excuse for him, that "The Origin of Species" had not at that time been published. Of that work Carlyle wrote, "Wonderful to me, as indicating the capricious stupidity of mankind; never could read a page of it, or waste the least thought upon it." A contemporary of Milton's described the immortal poet as "one Mr. Milton, a blind man." Carlyle, with all his learning and all his genius, here puts upon himself a scarcely less ridiculous mark.

From the gentle poet William Cowper I have a letter dated Olney, March 8, 1786, addressed to

Mr. Johnson, Bookseller
No. 72
St. Paul's Church Yard
London.

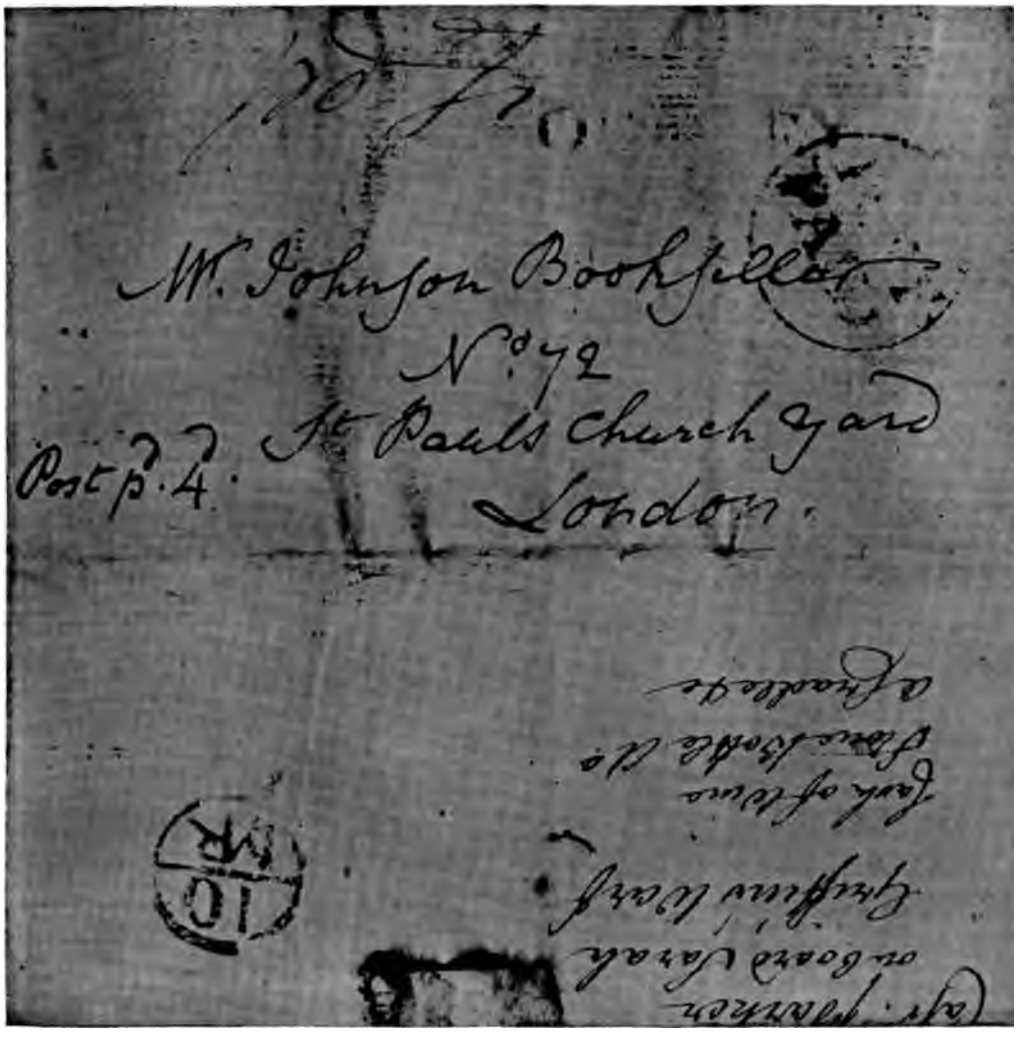
It is marked "Post pd 4$^{d.}$" Had Cowper been writing to a man whom he considered his equal or superior in rank, he would not have prepaid his letter. To do so might have been looked upon as an insult, for it would have implied that his correspondent was too poor to afford the postage. Above the address there is the following strange indorsement: —

Capt. Parker
on board Sarah
Griffin's Warf [*sic*]
Cask of wine
Stone Bottlells [*sic*]
A Cradle &c.

As this letter is printed in full in the fifteenth volume of Southey's edition of Cowper's works, I shall quote no more than this extract: —

"I learn with pleasure from my friends in Town that the Subscrip[t] prospers, and is likely to be brilliant and numerous. It is very little that in my situation I can contribute to it myself. I have however disposed of most of my papers, and some time about Easter, a friend of mine will attend you with 2 or 3 names and payments that have been pick'd up in this part of the world. The name of that friend is Bull. He is an Humourist and in some respects an oddity, but at the same time a man of excellent qualities and of much learning. Him I can see but seldom, for he lives at the distance of 5 miles from Olney, and he is the only neighbour of mine with whom I can converse at all."

It was a new version of the Iliad that Cowper was publishing by subscription. He had begun it almost by chance. Three months before the date of his letter he had written to John New-



ADDRESS OF COWPER'S LETTER TO MR. JOHNSON

ton: "For some weeks after I had finished the "Task," and sent away the last sheet corrected, I was through necessity idle, and suffered not a little in my spirits for being so. One day, being in such distress of mind as was hardly supportable, I took up the Iliad; and merely to divert attention, and with no more perception of what I was then entering upon than I have at this moment of what I shall be doing this day twenty years hence, translated the twelve first lines of it. The same necessity pressing me again, I had recourse to the same expedient, and translated more." With the success of the subscription he was well pleased. "All the Scotch universities subscribed. Some friend who tried his influence at Oxford received for answer that they subscribed to nothing." To Cambridge he felt himself "much more obliged, and much disposed to admire the liberality of the spirit which had been shown there." Oxford had indeed sunk low in this indifference to literature, and had sunk rapidly. A quarter of a century earlier, when an edition of Swift's works, in seventeen volumes, octavo, was announced, fifty-two copies were subscribed for by the college libraries and residents in Oxford, while in addition fifty-four were ordered by the booksellers. In Cambridge, but thirty copies in all were taken. Pope's success was far greater than Cowper supposed, for he had five

hundred and seventy-five subscribers at six guineas each. By the further payment which his bookseller undertook to make, he received over five thousand pounds.

Mr. Bull, "the humourist," Cowper sometimes addressed in his letters as "Carissime Taurorum." He described him as "a dissenter, but a liberal one; a man of letters and of genius; a master of a fine imagination; or rather, not master of it, — an imagination which, when he finds himself in the company he loves and can confide in, runs away with him into such fields of speculation as amuse and enlighten every other imagination that has the happiness to be of the party; at other times he has a tender and delicate sort of melancholy in his disposition not less agreeable in its way. No men are better qualified for companions in such a world as this than men of such a temperament. . . . Such a man is Mr. Bull. But — he smokes tobacco. Nothing is perfect.

'Nihil est ab omni
Parte beatum.'"

From the recluse of Olney — as timid as his own pet hares — to that king of blusterers, Daniel O'Connell, is a long stride; the gulf between the two men can be bridged by verse. Whether the following lines, which are in the handwriting of the great agitator, were composed

by him I do not know. Mr. John Dillon, to whom I repeated them, had never heard them before.

Still shalt thou be my waking theme,
Thy glories still my midnight dream,
And every thought and wish of mine,
Unconquered Erin! shall be thine!

DANIEL O'CONNELL.

29th April, 1837.

The first couplet recalls two lines in Pope's "Sappho to Phaon:"—

"'T is thou art all my care and my delight,
My daily longing and my dream by night."

A high place, indeed, did O'Connell hold in "the warm hearts and generous affections" of his countrymen. A year earlier than the date of this autograph Lord Brougham wrote: "Right or wrong, O'Connell has the Irish so attached to him that I see no other way of keeping that country quiet but through him." In 1826 Crabb Robinson chanced to be his fellow-traveler in crossing Ireland. "It was known on the road that 'the glorious Counsellor' was to be on the coach, and therefore at every village and wherever we changed horses there was a knot of people assembled to cheer him." Carlyle, who visited Dublin twenty years later, thus describes "this Demosthenes of blarney:" "I saw Conciliation Hall and the last glimpse of O'Connell, chief quack of the then world; first time I had

ever heard the lying scoundrel speak. Every sentence seemed to me a lie, and even to know that it was a detected lie." Another twenty years passed by, when John Bright, in one of his great speeches, said of the old agitator, "I know of nothing that was favorable to freedom, whether in connection with Ireland or England, that O'Connell did not support with all his great powers." Cobden, however, had never trusted him, though they were so often found voting in the same lobby. "He always treated me with friendly attention," he wrote, "but I never shook hands with him or faced his smile without a feeling of insecurity."

In the following letter Miss Mitford is, I think, writing about a collection of autographs and letters which she was having bound. These words of hers, coming from no remote past, will be read with all the greater pleasure in Boston, recalling as they do so pleasantly and so truthfully the memory of Mr. Fields: —

SWALLOWFIELD, Friday.

No parcel yet, my dear Mrs H——, and what is worse I have just received a packet from Boston, — autumn leaves from the American Forests, collected for me by Mrs Sparks, wife of the President of Harvard University, — which looks as if the steamer by which *our* parcel might have

Still shall thou be my waking theme
Thy glories still my midnight dream
And every thought and wish of mine
Unconquered Erin! shall be thine!

Daniel O'Connell
25th April 1837.

arrived had come in, so that for this week I have no hopes. Yet I have a letter to-day from Mr. [illegible], so it is not sent there, and all I wd. ask of you is to contrive that room may be left to insert the contents when time permits of their coming, for of Mr. Fields I am quite sure, — he never failed in an act requiring energy and kindness in his life, and would certainly not begin by failing towards me. What I asked of him was Portrait and Autograph of Longfellow and a drawing of Washington's house; Portrait and autograph of Whittier; Do. of Holmes, of Ticknor, and of Hawthorne, and I think I said Prescott. To this I added a sweeping clause that we should be glad of as many things bearing upon the book as he could pick up. I also expect from another quarter autographs of Mr. Macaulay and Alfred Tennyson; I expect that the friend who has promised these is waiting to bring them to me and prevented by weather, — he lives nine miles off, — but they could go, I suppose, on the top or bottom of the page, pasted on. So probably could some that I expect of Mr. [illegible] & Gerald Griffin. By the way, there is a portrait of the last prefixed to his brother's Life of him, a not uncommon book.

Mr. Kingsley came to me on Monday all through the rain & sate with me three hours. He brought the promised autograph, but it

turned out to be a sonnet to myself so full of gracious compliment as to be quite unfit to send to you — so the note, which is very characteristic and has a date, which the sonnet has not, must do instead. He tells me that the lithograph is a caricature, but that a good print of himself is coming out, if you think it worth keeping a place for. He is a charming person.

I have to-day a delightful letter from Mr Dillon, to whom I am about to write forthwith. Make my kindest compliments to Mr H——. If they have had similar rain in Holland Amsterdam must be under water. Our meadows are turned into lakes. Ever, dear Mrs H——, faithfully yours,

M. R. Mitford.

Crabb Robinson, who met Miss Mitford in 1824, describes her as having "pleasing looks, but no words." A very different account of her talk is given by Ticknor, who visited her eleven years later. "She seemed," he writes, "about fifty, short and fat, with very gray hair, perfectly visible under her cap, and nicely arranged in front. She has the kindest and simplest manners, and entertained us for two hours with the most animated conversation and a great variety of anecdote, without any of the pretensions of an author by profession, and without any of the


M. R. Mitford.

stiffness that generally belongs to single ladies of her age and reputation. We liked her very much, and the time seemed to have been short when, at ten o'clock, we drove back to Reading."

The letter printed below, a mere nothing in itself, but nevertheless showing the natural gracefulness of the writer, was given me by a young Englishman, who by his great learning had won Renan's esteem: —

PERROS-GUIREC (CÔTES DU NORD),
11 Août, 1889.

CHER MONSIEUR ——: Nous serons ici jusqu'aux premiers jours d'octobre. Votre visite serait pour nous la plus vive des joies. Venez; nous n'avons que des rochers; mais ils sont de belle qualité. Nous vous les montrerons.

Croyez à ma meilleure amitié.

E. RENAN.

Ecrivez-moi quand vous viendrez. Je vous donnerai l'itinéraire pour atteindre notre désert.

From Renan who escaped from the Church of Rome to Newman who escaped to it the transition is not difficult. The cardinal, some years ago, rewrote certain scenes in Terence's "Eunuchus," so as to render it fit for boys to act. My father, an old schoolmaster, who in his younger days had often made his pupils perform Latin plays, expressed his pleasure in a letter

which Newman saw. He in his turn was pleased, as the following letter shows. I have been told by a friend who for many years lived with him in the closest intimacy that he was peculiarly sensitive to the opinion of others. He always wished to stand well with the world. A defense of himself he had long meditated, when Kingsley, by his onslaught, gave him an opportunity. He seized it with eagerness, caring next to nothing about his assailant, but very much about the esteem of his countrymen. He read with the greatest satisfaction all the favorable reviews of his "Apologia" which came before him. A laudatory article in the London "Times," when a cardinal's hat was conferred on him, kept him in high spirits for some days.

REDNALL, Septr. 21, 1870.

DEAR SIR, — Your uncle's letter has gratified me very much, and I thank you for showing it to me.

It is a bold thing to alter a Classic, and I only did it for our own boys. In receiving the commendation of strangers, I gain what I never aspired to, and what is a pleasant surprise to me.

When you write to Mr. Hill, I hope you will express my acknowledgements to him.

I am, dear Sir,

Very faithfully yours,

JOHN H. NEWMAN.

From Cardinal Newman, the mender of plays, I pass easily to Mr. Henry Irving, with whom I corresponded last summer about a Johnsonian treasure in his possession. He wrote to me as follows:—

LYCEUM THEATRE, 14 July, 1894.

MY DEAR SIR, — I have no doubt that it was from Thomas Osborne, as you suggest, Johnson received the Shakespeare folio ("The Second Impression") which I possess. There are three inscriptions, which run thus:—

(1.) "Bo[t] at D[r] Johnson's Sale
Feb. 18. 1785. S. I."

(2.) "This book at ye death of Theobald the editor of Shakspear came into the hands of Osborn ye bookseller of Gray's Inn — who soon after presented it to the late D[r] Johnson.
S. I. Feb. 25, 1785."

(3.) (This is a printed cutting pasted in.) "In the late sale of D[r] Johnson's books there were several articles which sold wonderfully cheap, particularly the following — a folio edition of Shakespeare, the second, with a large number of notes, MS., in the margin, Johnson's own handwriting. The book had this further incidental circumstance enhancing its value, that it had been the property of Theobald and had many notes also written by him. The title and part of another leaf were wanting. These were the only

articles on the *per contra* side; and the book, thus extremely curious, sold for only a guinea!"

I paid £100 for it!

I am, dear Sir,

Faithfully yours,

HENRY IRVING.

P. S. Who "S. I." was I have no idea.

"It has," writes Boswell, "been confidently related, with many embellishments, that Johnson one day knocked Osborne down in his shop with a folio, and put his foot upon his neck. The simple truth I had from Johnson himself. 'Sir, he was impertinent to me, and I beat him. But it was not in his shop; it was in my own chamber.'" May it not be the case that Mr. Irving's treasure is this great historic folio? In the good old days, in our grammar schools, the unhappy culprit was often required to provide at his own cost the rods with which he was to be birched. Might not Osborne, in like manner, have provided the folio with which he was to be knocked down? Even his "impassive dulness which deadened the shafts of Pope's satires" would scarcely have been proof against a beating with his own gift. Nichols, indeed, maintains that it was with a "Biblia Græca Septuaginta fol. 1594, Frankfort," that the deed was done. He had himself seen the book in the shop of one Thorpe at Cambridge, and

read a note in it by the Rev. Mr. Mills which certified the fact. This folio is not mentioned, however, in the Auction Catalogue of Johnson's Library. A Greek Bible, I must admit, was left by him as a legacy to a friend. Nevertheless, it seems unlikely that so devout a man as the great moralist would have made so profane a use even of the Septuagint. He who took off his hat when he walked over the ground where a chapel had once stood was little likely to select a Bible wherewith to floor his adversary.

III

For many years I was a regular contributor to the "Saturday Review,"—the "Superfine Review" of Thackeray, the "Great Saturday Reviler" of John Bright. With the political part of that journal I had nothing whatever to do. Its politics, the editor told me, were Liberal with a small *l*. The *l* was so small that I never discovered it. In religious matters the "Saturday Review" was a pillar of the old-fashioned Church and State party. If the first editor was orthodox, he must nevertheless have been a somewhat strange prop for a church, for he swore like a trooper. There was, I was told, only one man in the office who could stand up against his volley of oaths, and that was the manager,—a quiet-looking old gentleman, whose name of David Jones, pleasant as it looked at the bottom of his quarterly checks, was in itself somewhat suggestive of marine profanity. He was so religious a man that he would not have submitted to be damned even by a prince without rebuke. The proprietor of the paper, Mr. Beresford Hope, one of the two members of Parliament for the University of Cambridge, used every year to give the contributors a grand dinner at Green-

wich. How oppressive was the bill of fare! What courses had to be struggled through, — courses each with its own appropriate wine! One year I chanced to sit by one of the first physicians of London. When he saw me pass over course after course, and reject wine after wine, he broke out into indignant remonstrances. My delicate state of health, I said, forced me to be abstemious. "My dear sir," he replied, "you should have done as I always do on such occasions. For the last three days I have carefully prepared myself for this dinner, and you can easily see how thorough and successful my preparation has been." I told him that he reminded me of the great Abernethy, who, early in the century, had stood at the head of the medical profession in England. In one of his works he had laid it down as an invariable rule that no more than eight ounces of animal food should be taken in a single day. From time to time he would give a dinner to the most promising of his hospital students. "Now, my lads," he used to say, as they sat down to a well-spread table, "hang the eight-ounce rule;" and they did suspend it for that night, at least. I went on to say that I always wished, at these Greenwich dinners, that every guest were provided with the placard which in certain towns I had seen hung outside the omnibuses when there was room for no more passengers, — "Full inside." Furnished with it,

a man, when he had had enough, could enjoy a quiet talk with those sitting near him without being worried at every moment by the waiter thrusting dishes and bottles of wine over his shoulder.

At one of these Saturday Review dinners, the cook had forgotten to bring up the rear of the long line of dainties with those boiled beans and bacon in which the man of oaths took special delight. This happened before I had begun to write for the paper, so that I did not witness the strange scene which followed. The landlord was sent for, and on him was opened a battery of the strongest and most original profanity, worthy of the rage of a man who, having dined on turtle-soup, fish of a dozen varieties, fowl, flesh, and venison, felt that, without beans and bacon, all was vanity and vexation of spirit. The memory of such a man should surely be honored in Boston.

Scarcely less strange a pillar of the Anglican Church was my kind friend the second editor. In his early manhood he had filled the pulpit in the Unitarian chapel in London in which Mr. Moncure Conway so long officiated in later years. A Unitarian, I believe, he remained till the end of his life. Like Lord Chancellor Eldon, he was a buttress rather than a pillar of the Church, for he was never seen inside. His were the palmy days of the "Saturday Review." He was supported by a large and strong staff of reviewers. Matthew

Arnold once said to me that it was easy to see that every subject was intrusted to a writer who was master of it. Among the contributors were E. A. Freeman and J. R. Green, the historians, Sir Henry Maine and Lord Justice Bowen, Sir James Stephen and his brother Mr. Leslie Stephen, and Professor Owen. It was in the "Saturday Review" that Mr. Freeman and some of the younger writers of his school so often exposed the blunders into which Mr. Froude was always falling. In this exposure, Mr. Green, I have little doubt, often bore his part. I was told that when he was still a young writer, — unhappily he did not live to be an old one, — at an evening party, the lady of the house brought him up to introduce him to Mr. Froude. The great man looked coldly at him for a moment, and then exclaimed, "Saturday Reviewer! Don't want to know him." It is a pity that Mr. Froude could not have laid to heart the lessons that were taught him by his reviewers, however bitter was the language in which they were imparted. Of strict accuracy he seemed incapable by nature; just as Johnson's friend, Bennet Langton, "had no turn to economy," so Mr. Froude had no turn to truthfulness. Where nature had fallen short, inclination and study did little to remedy the deficiency. He was not, perhaps, aware of his failings. I once sent him a few notes about some errors in his Life of Carlyle.

He replied, " The utmost care will not prevent mistakes. Printers blunder when no blunders could be anticipated, and the eye passes over them unconsciously." In this defense of himself against the suspicion of carelessness he was so careless as to send his letter unsigned.

My friend the editor, from whom I have been led away by this digression, however severe was the formidable " Review " which he so ably conducted, was himself the most kindly and gentle of men. He was rarely to be seen anywhere but in his office and his home. He never went to a club, and he never dined out except on a Saturday when the week's work was done. His daughter, under the name of Ross Niel, had published a few volumes of poetical plays, written with great taste and spirit. His one relief from work was music. Every evening he played on the violoncello, while she accompanied him on the piano. However late his task was finished, — and every Thursday night it went on to the small hours of the morning, — he soothed his tired nerves by this little concert. How the nerves of the authors were soothed, who were often so mercilessly criticised, is matter for conjecture.

He once sent me for review the longest modern novel I have ever seen. It could scarcely have fallen short of Richardson's "Clarissa." It was so long that some of the volumes I made no pretense

of reading. I did not even cut their leaves. To my surprise, my article was not inserted, though I received for it the usual payment. The author — an old soldier — had just had a play brought out at one of the London theatres, and had received some compliments in the "Saturday Review." He wrote so grateful a letter of acknowledgment that my friend owned to me that he had not the heart to ridicule his foolish novel, and so had committed my article to the waste-paper basket.

One day he told me of a vexatious blunder into which he had fallen. I had sent him an article on school histories, in which I maintained that Goldsmith's History of Greece with all its errors, written as it was by a man of genius, was a far better book for young people than Dr. Smith's History with all its accuracy and all its dullness. Dr. Smith was a big man in the literary world of London, not by his schoolbooks, though they brought him in many thousands of pounds every year, but as the editor of the "Quarterly Review," that famous "Review" which, years earlier, was thought to have "snuffed out" poor Keats's soul. He had long wished to know my friend, and had asked a common acquaintance to let them meet at his dinner-table. The dinner was fixed for a certain Saturday. On the morning of that very day appeared my article. It had been in type for

some weeks. That it contained an attack on Dr. Smith's History had altogether escaped my friend's memory. The awkward blunder which he had made he discovered an hour or two before the dinner-party. It was with a heavy heart that he went to meet this brother editor. It was impossible to allude to the article, and explain his entire innocence of any wish to give offense. He felt sure it would be believed that it was a premeditated slight. The meeting was a cool one. Dr. Smith, he told me with a smile, never expressed the slightest wish to see him again.

My friend had also an amusing story to tell of the editor of the "Westminster Review," one Mr. H——, a successor, though not the immediate successor, of John Stuart Mill in that post. Mr. H—— published a book on theology, in which he supported his views by citations from the Greek fathers. Of Greek, however, he knew next to nothing, and so he sought the aid of a learned friend in his translations of these passages. Unfortunately, it too frequently happened that learning and his theological theories were at variance. In those cases it was learning that had to yield. The fathers were made to say, not what they had said, but what they ought to have said, and what undoubtedly they would have said had each of them been a Mr. H——. He begged my friend, who was at this time assistant editor of the "Sat-

urday Review," and whom he had long known, to get his book noticed in that journal. All he asked for was a review, — whether favorable or unfavorable he cared not a jot. The work was accordingly sent to a learned critic, who, without any pity, mercilessly exposed the writer's monstrous blunders. So severe was the criticism that the assistant editor did all he could to keep it from appearing. Just as, in the Reign of Terror, a friendly clerk in the office of the Committee of Public Safety often saved a man's life by keeping the paper containing his case at the bottom of the pile, so the assistant editor for many weeks kept this review at the bottom of the pile of articles that were awaiting insertion. The only result was a succession of bitter reproaches from the author for his indifference to an old friend, who asked for nothing but a review, and cared not whether it was friendly or hostile. At last the review was printed. Mr. H—— at once quarreled with his old friend, and never spoke to him again.

It was not till about the year 1869 that I became a contributor to the "Saturday Review;" but when I had once begun to write there were few numbers for some years in which I had not an article. The editor discovered in me a certain vein of humor, and for the most part sent me books to review which deserved little more than ridicule. What havoc I made among the novel-

ists and the minor poets! I amused my readers because I was first amused myself by the absurdities which I everywhere found in these writers, and by the odd fancies which rose in my mind as I read their works. At last, however, my humor began to fail. It was over the minor poets that I first became dejected. Even in their tragedies I no longer found anything amusing. I entreated my friendly editor to hand them over to a fresher hand. With the novelists I struggled on for some while; but finally even they could no longer raise a natural laugh. My mirth was becoming forced, and I let them follow the poets. Now and then, it is true, I lighted upon a pretty story. I recall with pleasure Mrs. Parr's "Dorothy Fox" and Mrs. Walford's "Mr. Smith." Whenever I met modest worth, I hope I always did it justice.

One result of all this novel-reading was a total incapacity, lasting for many years, of reading any novels except those which were the favorites of my younger days. To read a novel became so inseparably connected, in my mind, with three pounds ten shillings (about seventeen dollars), the usual payment for a "Saturday Review" article, that without the one I could not undertake the other. All in vain have friends urged me to read the works of Black, Blackmore, Hardy, Howells, Henry James, Stevenson, and Kipling. Not a single story of any one of these writers have I

ever read, or am I likely ever to read. Perhaps, however, I should be less confident on this matter, for I have just been induced to listen to Miss Jewett's "A Marsh Island." It pleased me so much that I see it is possible that stories may solace the hours of my old age, as it draws on, as they charmed those of my youth.

Among my autographs there are not a few letters from those who had suffered from my reviews. They were forwarded to me by the editor; for my name was not known, as the contributions were anonymous. An enraged poetess warned me that the day would come when women would have their rights. Then the dastardly man who insolently compared the flights of a swan to the waddlings of the domestic duck would have to meet her whom he had thus wronged, face to face, pistol in hand. She was far fiercer than a brother poet who had insisted on being reviewed. "When I read my own poems," he wrote to the editor, "and remember that they are written by a man not yet twenty-one, I am astounded at my own genius. Other men would say ability; but genius I say, and genius I mean." All I recall of his verse is a single line, in which he describes how the sea

"Burst in one terrific boil."

A year or so later we received from him the following letter: —

SIR, — You reduced me to a jelly *re* my "Throbs of Genius." Can you find it in you to discover balm in Gilead for "After-Throbs"?

Your broken-boned
AUGUSTUS JINKS.[1]

He wrote too late. My review of "After-Throbs" appeared the very day on which I received his letter, and it was not balm that it contained. Unhappy poet! may his genius have long ceased to astound him, but may it be the object of the ardent if somewhat perplexed admiration of a dutiful and loving wife!

Now and then my reviews brought me letters of a different character. One was from a grand-niece of Sir Walter Scott, who was grateful for the resentment I had shown when a popular female novelist, with a great parade of conferring a benefit on the world, began to serve up a miserable hash of his stories, each in a penny number some twenty or thirty pages long. In her abridgment of "Rob Roy" she had been so shameless as to make one of the purest of writers guilty of a coarse jest. There was something in this abridgment which led me to suspect that it had not been made from the original, but in the very wantonness of indolence from the dramatized

[1] I have changed the names of the poet and his works, so that he may not be recognized.

version. I turned to the play, and my suspicions were confirmed, for there I found this same coarse jest. "It is," wrote Scott's niece, "a real pleasure to me to thank you, those who would have done so far better than I being all dead. . . . There is something touching in the fact that Sir Walter's fame lives in children; we must be men and women to thoroughly appreciate him, but it is as children that we learn to love him and his creations."

The following letter came to me from the west coast of Ireland: —

DEAR MR. LITERARY CRITIC, — I 'd rather like to make your acquaintance in the flesh, as I have done long since in the spirit — for you seem to have a good deal of fun in you, and *some* feeling; I say *some* feeling with caution, for in many ways you are utterly without heart, witness the cruel way you cut up those poor lady-novelists. You hash their grammar — their best and most finely-turned phrases, their plots, their spelling, everything is made mince-meat of, without mercy, and without remorse. In the review I have just laid down after some minutes of quiet enjoyment of Mrs. ——'s novel, how you ravened like a wolf among her pet descriptions (there 's a bit of metaphor for you now to carp at), and then you were coarse, not to say brutal, when you said that you

could have seen her heroine hanged with much complacency. I often think you are a sour discontented old bachelor with a natural antipathy to the sex — when suddenly you turn round and by a little sentence betray more feeling than I could give you credit for, which makes me suppose you are lord of a happy household of girls and boys with quite a fund of general benevolence in your composition.

Now it was not to tell you all this I have taken the trouble on this blessed Valentine's Day to sit down and write to you. It is to tell you (and here, if you have got so far, you smile sardonically) I too am among the foolish women. I have written a book — of verses — and published them. I have put dashes purposely between each word to give you time to breathe — and I want to know will you review it? or has it come to you? or would you if I sent you a copy? You said in one of your late "Saturdays" that though nearly every one who can rhyme tries his or her hand at a sonnet — very few succeed. I send you four sonnets. Do you think them any good? Some reviewer in this sweet little Ireland, peaceful, prosperous, happy Ireland — said I had been following in Mrs. Browning's footsteps, of course I love and honour her — and admire her with all my heart, but I never had the presumption to fancy I could follow her even afar off. One day after I had

read these remarks, the thought stuck to me, till I wrote these things I send you. When first her sonnets from the Portuguese were given me — I lived on them.

I don't know if this letter will ever reach its destination. I have a very vague idea about a reviewer in the "Saturday." He is a sort of myth —and yet a very palpable reality. . . . I 'd almost rather be cut up than passed over in contemptuous silence, and I don't think any one with a soul worth calling a soul would let it be "snuffed out by an article." I 'm perfectly sure Keats never deserved that line of Byron's — poor fellow — there was "death in his hand" long before the review in the "Quarterly" was put into it.

Farewell. May you live to write many more critiques — but not on me — clever, satirical, abusive, amusing, admirable, as yours sometimes are. I say *sometimes* — as I before said *some* — for you are not infallible.

Truly yours, —— ——.

I cannot call to mind whether we received this lady's poems. Her letter shows that she might have done something better than write sonnets. Anybody can write sonnets, though few can read them.

The following letter was written to one of my uncles, a young barrister, by Major John Cart-

wright, a radical of the old school. So early as 1774, he had published a "Letter in Defence of American Independence." He was at that time an officer in the navy. Fond as he was of his profession, he threw it up rather than take part in the war against our colonies. He entered the militia, and rose to the rank of major. Three years before the date of his letter, he had been present at a meeting held in Birmingham for the purpose of electing a "legislatorial attorney," who was to knock at the door of the House of Commons, and claim the right to look after the interests of that great town in Parliament. With all its population, its industry, and its wealth, it was unrepresented. In its case, and in the case of many another English town in those evil days, taxation went without representation. The major and four gentlemen who stood by his side at the meeting were put on their trial at the Warwick assizes for misdemeanor. Another of my uncles had been on the platform, but he was young and insignificant enough to escape prosecution. His brother, the barrister, was one of Cartwright's counsel. On the morning of the trial, the old fellow said to him, "I hope they will send me to prison. It will be the best thing for the cause, for I am sure to die there. I hope they will send me to prison." The judge was too wise to make such a martyr. Cartwright's four friends were

punished with imprisonment, but he himself was let off with a fine of a hundred pounds. From one of the pockets of his waistcoat, which, after the fashion of the previous century, he wore of a great size, he drew out a large canvas bag, from which he slowly counted one hundred pounds in gold. "He believed, he said, they were all *good sovereigns*." Even the judge himself was amused by his composed manner and his dry tone. Cartwright outlived his trial three years, dying at the age of eighty-four. His statue stands before his house in Burton Crescent, London. His niece, Mrs. Penrose, under the assumed name of Mrs. Markham, used to be well known to the children of my younger days by her histories.

DEAR HILL, — Colonel de Vergier and two other French officers, escaped from Bourbon Dungeons, dine with me on *Thursday at* 5.

Make one with us if you can.

Yours truly,

J. CARTWRIGHT.

Remember the Titles of the several Acts respecting Juries.

BURTON CRESCENT,
Tuesday, 12 Nov. 1822.
M. D. HILL, ESQ.
Boswell Court, Carey Street,
Lincoln's Inn.

The major, it is said, usually signed his letters, "Yours radically." These French officers had escaped from that tyranny which the armies of the allies had imposed on France, and on so much of Europe, after the defeat of Napoleon. The common tyrant had been caged in St. Helena, but over each unhappy nation the tyrant of the ancient stock was only the more firmly fixed. What the rulers of the earth were doing in the year in which this letter was written is thus shown by Miss Martineau: "The king of Prussia amused himself and his advisers with devising a plan of a new order of nobility which should suddenly become as imposing and influential as if it had been a thousand years old. Ferdinand of Spain was inventing tinsel ornaments for the Virgin. The restored Bourbons of France were studying how best to impose dumbness on their noisy nation. The king of Sardinia was swimming paper ducks in a wash basin to while away his time." My father met one of the French officers who had escaped from the Bourbon dungeons, who said to him, in English with a foreign accent which added not a little to his humor, "I was once hanged in France, but, very fortunately, I was not present on the occasion." He and his fellow-prisoners who had been happy enough to escape the gallows, to which some of their associates were sent, had been hanged in effigy. The same officer told my father that many of his

THe Contractors for ſale of the Lands and Poſſeſsions of the late King, *Queen* and Prince, have reſolved to begin their ſittings for Sales upon Monday the Fourth of *March*, 1649. as to all ſuch of the ſaid Lands (onely) before that time Surveyed, and Certified to the Regiſter, whereof there ſhall be immediate Tenancies; from which day the reſpective preemptions of the immediate Tenants are to begin: And for all ſuch of the Lands, whereof there are ſuch immediate Tenancies, and whereof the Surveys ſhall be returned after that day, the ſaid reſpective preemptions to commence according to a late Additional Act of the 18th of *Febr.* 1649.

William Tayleure Clerk,
attending the Contractors.

countrymen maintained that the French had gained the battle of Trafalgar. "Yes, I reply," the officer continued. "It is true we gained the battle; but, unfortunately, our French sailors were so ignorant of navigation that they steered their own ships, and their English prizes also, straight into English harbors."

From a Bourbon king by an easy transition we arrive at Charles I.; for both stubbornly moved along the same narrow groove of dull bigotry and tyranny. In this case I have no autograph, but something perhaps as interesting as an autograph, — a handbill announcing the public sale of the property of the Crown. It runs as follows: —

"The Contractors for sale of the Lands and Possessions of the late King, Queen, and Prince have resolved to begin their sittings for Sales upon Monday the Fourth of March, 1649, as to all such of the said Lands (onely) before that time Surveyed and Certified to the Register, wherof there shall be immediate Tenancies; from which day the respective preemptions of the immediate Tenants are to begin: And for all such of the Lands, wherof there are such immediate Tenancies, and wherof the Surveys shall be returned after that day, the said respective preemptions to commence according to a late Additional Act of the 18th of February, 1648.

WILLIAM TAYLEURE, CLERK
attending the Contractors."

How great is the transition when we pass from the old radical major and the contractors for the sale of the king's lands to the poet laureate Southey, a man who, with all his noble qualities, had broken, like the Lost Leader, from the van and the freemen, and sunk to the rear and the slave! A few months after the date of the following letter, young George Ticknor met him at an evening party. "There was little company present," writes Ticknor, "and soon after I went in I found myself in a corner with Southey, from which neither of us moved until nearly midnight. He immediately began to talk about America. Of Roger Williams and John Eliot I was ashamed to find that he knew more than I did. Roger Williams, he thought, deserved the reputation which Penn has obtained, and Eliot he pronounced one of the most extraordinary men of any country. As he was once traveling in a post-chaise to London, he bought at a stall in Nottingham Mather's 'Magnalia,' which he read all the way to town, and found it one of the most amusing books he had ever seen. He had read most of our American poetry, and estimated it more highly than we are accustomed to." Two years later, Ticknor, who visited Southey at Keswick, recorded: "He considers himself an author by profession, and therefore, as he told me, never writes anything which will not sell, in the hours

he regularly devotes to labor. For this reason his poetry has been strictly his amusement. His light reading after supper is now in the fifty-three folios of the 'Acta Sanctorum.'" Macaulay wrote of him: "A good father, husband, brother, friend, but prone to hate people whom he did not know, solely on account of differences of opinion, and in his hatred singularly bitter and rancorous. Then he was arrogant beyond any man in literary history. To do him justice, he had a fine, manly spirit where money was concerned." Like Johnson, whom he resembled in his generosity, Southey had known the meaning of the word *impransus*. "When 'Joan of Arc' was in the press," he wrote, "I often walked the streets at dinner time for want of a dinner, when I had not eighteen pence for the ordinary, nor bread and cheese at my lodgings. But do not suppose that I thought of my dinner when I was walking; my head was full of what I was composing." It may well be doubted whether he was more bitter in his hatred towards any one than Macaulay was towards Brougham and Croker; Brougham, of whom he wrote, "His powers gone. His spite immortal. A dead nettle;" and Croker, whom "he detested more than cold boiled veal," and whose "varlet's jacket" he promised "to dust in the next number of the Blue and Yellow [the 'Edinburgh Review']." Southey's

arrogance had been fostered by Landor, who, in the beautiful lines beginning,

> "It was a dream (ah! what is not a dream?),"

comparing him with Virgil, had described the English poet laureate as

> "Higher in intellect, more conversant
> With earth and heaven, and whatso lies between."

Landor's monstrous laudation had perhaps been won by Southey's admiration of his brother bard. Writing of him, he said, "He is the only man living of whose praise I was ambitious, or whose censure would have humbled me."

The lady to whom Southey's letter was addressed was a correspondent of Pascal Paoli, the Corsican patriot, and of Mrs. Hemans; I have letters addressed to her by both of them. J. Rickman, who franked it, was the secretary of the Speaker of the House of Commons. "His outside," wrote Southey, "has so little polish about it that once, having gone from Christ Church to Pool in his own boat, he was taken by the press gang; his robust figure, hard-working hands, and strong voice all tending to deceive them."

KESWICK, 23 Dec. 1816.

DEAR MADAM, — I am very much obliged to you for the manuscript music. The ears which nature has given me are of no use when music is

Keswick. 23 Dec. 1816

the case, — but my eldest daughter has some allotment of a sense in which I am deficient, — and the tune seems to give pleasure to all who hear it.

Mr. Bonamy informed me that Mr. M. Coates was, at that time, hopelessly ill. I have not seen him since I had the pleasure of meeting you at his table, — and probably he is no longer an inhabitant of this world! Of my other Bristol friends so few are now remaining, that I do not think I shall ever have heart to set foot within my native city again. — Should you ever visit this part of England (the most beautiful part of it) it will give both Mrs. Southey and myself great pleasure to show you the environs of Keswick.

Believe me my dear Madam
Your obliged
ROBERT SOUTHEY.

LONDON, Twenty Sixth December, 1816
MISS MAYNARD,
6 Portland Place, Clifton,
Bristol.
Free. J. RICKMAN.

His indifference to music Southey shared with many men of genius. "Sir Isaac Newton, hearing Handel play on the harpsichord, could find nothing worthy to remark but the elasticity of his fingers." That great man, by the way, cared as little for poetry as for music: "once being asked

his opinion of it, he quoted a sentiment of Barrow that it was ingenious nonsense." Pope, who had so exquisite an ear for the melody of verse, had no more music in his soul than Newton. One day, at a concert, he asked Dr. Arbuthnot whether the rapture of the company over Handel and his band did not proceed solely from affectation. Johnson, in the Hebrides, used often to stand for some time with his ear close to the great drone of the bagpipe; nevertheless, much as he must have endeared himself to his Highland host by this devotion, he owned that it was not till he was past seventy that he was ever affected by musical sounds. What first moved him were the French horns at a Freemason's funeral procession. Wordsworth's ear was almost as deficient as his brother poet's, and so was Coleridge's.

Southey, twenty years after the date of his letter, had the heart once more to set foot in his native city. If he was saddened by the loss of the friends of his youth, he had a father's quiet pleasure in showing his son the home of his early years. "We visited together all his old haunts," the young man wrote, — "the house where he was born, the schools he had been sent to. He had forgotten nothing, — no short cut, no by-way; and he would surprise me often by darting down some alley, or threading some narrow lane, — the same which in his schoolboy days he had traversed."

From Southey I pass to De Quincey. What a curious account has Carlyle given us of the poet laureate's outburst of anger against the opium-eater! "I asked mildly, with no appearance of special interest, but with more than I really felt, 'Do you know De Quincey?' 'Yes, sir,' said Southey, with extraordinary animosity, 'and if you have opportunity, I 'll thank you to tell him he is one of the greatest scoundrels living!' I laughed lightly, said I had myself little acquaintance with the man, and could not wish to recommend myself by that message. Southey's face, as I looked at it, was become of slate color, the eyes glancing, the attitude rigid, the figure altogether a picture of Rhadamanthine rage, — that is, rage conscious to itself of being just. He doubtless felt I would expect some explanation from him. 'I have told Hartley Coleridge,' said he, 'that he ought to take a strong cudgel, proceed straight to Edinburgh, and give De Quincey, publicly in the streets there, a sound beating as a calumniator, cowardly spy, traitor, base betrayer of the hospitable social hearth for one thing!'" The thrashing would have been well deserved, though one of the Wordsworths should have had a hand in it; for both the poet and his sister, quite as much as Coleridge, had found him "a base betrayer of the hospitable social hearth." The hospitality and kindness which he had for

years received from them he repaid by laying bare, in magazine articles, the privacy of their quiet home, and by strokes of envy all the more malignant because they were covert. It was, it seems probable, the recollection of De Quincey's treachery which led Mr. Lowell to describe him as "a kind of inspired *cad*." "Though my intercourse with Southey," De Quincey writes, "was at no time very strict, I was yet on such terms that I might in a qualified sense call myself his friend." If Southey's advice had been followed, and if the cudgel had been brought down on the opium-eater's back, De Quincey might have cried out to this "friend in a qualified sense" in the words of the old epigram: —

> "When late I attempted your pity to move,
> Why seemed you so deaf to my prayers?
> Perhaps it was right to dissemble your love,
> But why did you kick me down stairs?"

There would have been no need for Hartley Coleridge to take a strong cudgel; it was not a case for "an oak-plant of a tremendous size," such as old Johnson kept by him when he received "the menaces of the ruffian" Macpherson. For De Quincey a cane would have sufficed. "He was," writes Carlyle, "one of the smallest man figures I ever saw; shaped like a pair of tongs, and hardly above five feet in all." "What would one give to have him in a box, and take him out

NAB'S COTTAGE, THE HOME OF THOMAS DE QUINCEY AND HARTLEY COLERIDGE

to talk!" said Mrs. Carlyle. Hartley Coleridge was scarcely the man to send to cudgel any one, even a dwarf. With his constant drinking, it was as much as he could have done to keep himself upright; that he should be expected to knock a man down was surely unreasonable. In those summer holidays of my boyhood which I spent at Ambleside I often heard stories of his intemperance. He was living at that time in a cottage on the road to Rydal, supporting himself mainly by giving lessons. No prudent person, I was told, in offering him refreshments, ever had more than a single glass of wine brought in. If the whole bottle was set before him, he was sure to finish it. One summer, on my returning to Ambleside, I learnt that he was dead. He had been overcome with drink at some friend's house or at an inn. Staggering homewards, he had crept into a low shed, where he had passed the night on the bare earth. The chill which he caught carried him off in a few days. Every one spoke of him with kindly pity. His only enemy was himself.

The following letter was written to the wife of my uncle the barrister; in what year I do not know: —

Monday Night, October 12.

My dear Madam, — I have been obliged to go to bed from mere overpowering want of sleep, and *thus* — viz. by sleeping too long (having only

this minute awakened) — I have unavoidably broken up our plan, which was to have come up in a coach, and have left it to your choice either to return with us (viz. our party of last night), or else to retain us as your companions during Mr Hill's absence: — This on the assumption that you had no other engagement. At present, though too late for this choice, yet *on the same assumption of your being not otherwise engaged*, I write to propose that Mrs De Quincey, myself and my daughter, should come up: — we shall take tea before coming. But we are not quite sure whether we were right in understanding that you did not yourself mean to accompany the gentlemen to the dinner-party. One word of answer will suffice — viz. YES, meaning that you *are* at home and disengaged, or *not* better occupied in reading, writing, etc. No, meaning generally that you *are* unavoidably engaged.

Believe me, my dear Madam,
Ever your faithful Servant
THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

On September 23, 1828, my uncle had written to his wife: "I found De Quincey, who has for the tenth time renounced opium, which he said he had not tasted for one hundred and eighty days. He received me with great warmth." In some Reminiscences which my uncle left he says:

"De Quincey possessed but few books, and those few were generally where he was not. His habits of life to other evils added that of procrastination, and this practice caused him often to revolve the matter of his works for years before he reduced his thoughts to writing." A curious instance of this revolving habit is thus described by Mrs. Carlyle: "A boy of the English opium-eater's told me once he would begin Greek presently; but his father wished him to learn it through the medium of Latin, and he was not entered in Latin yet because his father wished to teach him from a grammar of his own, which he had not yet begun to write." In the fewness of the books which De Quincey possessed he was like Wordsworth and Landor. Wordsworth had never had many books, while Landor gave away his almost as fast as he got them. It was the want of them which led him into those errors as to facts and those inaccuracies in quotation with which his writings are thickly strewn. When I was an undergraduate at Oxford, one of my comrades, the late Professor John Nichol, of Glasgow, son of the author of "The Architecture of the Heavens," told me that his father first met De Quincey at a dinner-party in Edinburgh. The little man came very late, dressed in a rusty suit of black. In the drawing-room, after dinner, he and Dr. Nichol stood together in a corner,

engaged in talk, when, in a slow, measured tone, De Quincey said to his new acquaintance, "Dr. Nichol, can you lend me twopence?" He borrowed money, my friend added, to lay out on opium, and always asked for very small sums, knowing that they would not be refused. Dr. Nichol was so much charmed with his talk that he asked him to visit him, and had him for his guest for some weeks.

In 1880 General Gordon's brother, Sir Henry W. Gordon, intrusted me with the interesting duty of editing the letters which that great man had written to his sister during the six years of his government of the Soudan. Sir Henry had at first hoped that the work would be undertaken by my brother-in-law, Sir John Scott, at that time vice-president of the international court at Alexandria, now judicial adviser to the Egyptian government. He, fortunately for me, felt that his official position would not allow him to write with the necessary freedom. On his recommendation I was intrusted with the task.[1] During these six years of command, vast as was the region over which Gordon exercised almost absolute power, he held no higher rank than colonel. On him was conferred no promotion and no reward. Decorations and honors, year after year, on New

[1] I published my book under the title, *Colonel Gordon in Central Africa.*

Year's Day and the Queen's birthday, fell in showers; none fell on him.

Though he had given his consent to the publication of his letters, he refused to take any direct part in the work. Whatever information I needed I had to get from him through his brother. At first his answers to my questions were copied by Sir Henry. Before long, one came to me in Gordon's own hand, with the addition of a few words advising his brother henceforth to spare himself the trouble of making copies. I noticed how anxious he was to avoid giving pain. Thus, in a paper which I have had the pleasure of depositing in the library of Williams College, he says, "In this memo. allusions are made to Baker which must be wrapped up." Baker was Sir Samuel Baker, the African explorer. Gordon had asked that a few words should be added to the final chapter, in acknowledgment of the kindness shown him on a certain occasion by the Duke of Cambridge and General Sir Lintorn Simmons. All my proofs were read by his brother, but the proof of the last sheet he saw himself, as I discovered when it was returned to me. Against the passage where I said that the duke and Sir Lintorn doubtless felt that in honoring him they were honoring themselves he had written in the margin, in pencil, "Oh! oh!"

The following trifling incident shows the kind-

ness of this great man's heart. I had never met him, for he did not wish to see me till the book was published. After its publication, it so happened that we were never in London at the same time. He chanced to pay a visit to Bournemouth, where, as he had learnt from some common friend, my youngest son was at school. He went to see the little fellow, talked kindly to him, and gave him a half-crown.

I do not know whether this anecdote is in print. I had it from my publisher, who in his turn had it from Sir Henry Gordon. The Prince of Wales invited the general to dinner, soon after his return to England from the East. The hero replied that he regretted he could not accept the invitation, as by the hour named for the meal he was always in bed. The prince at once begged him to come to lunch.

The following letter was written to my brother-in-law: —

U[NITED] S[ERVICE] CLUB, PALL MALL.
16. 2. 80.

MY DEAR MR. SCOTT, — I am sending out the Deed Box, full of the papers, addressed to Morrice Pacha to whom I have written; you will not mind paying him any expences; I will pay the Box as far as I can. One paper on Abyssinia will come to you by post in a short time, also some other papers I have, and which have not

yet come from Egypt. I send you two books, one as much in praise as the other is in blame of me. I do so because I wish to *point* my remark, that the praise or blame of man does not affect a man's welfare; many would have been troubled at having a book written about them, such as Lindley wrote. Thank God, it has never done me any harm, though its publication cost £1000.

R—— W—— did a noble act, he called on me, so I at once apologized for my rude telegram and am going to call on him.

I send you the key of Box and pity you reading *those* letters.

Believe me, with kind regards to Mrs Scott and your children,

Yours sincerely and obliged,

C. G. GORDON.

I have in my collection the originals of the two following telegrams sent to Gordon when he was acting as the representative of England on the European Commission of the Danube.[1] I reproduce them exactly as they were written, with all their faults in spelling.

[1] To this Commission each of the Great Powers sent a member. Its chief duty was the improvement of the mouth of the Danube. By 1881 the depth of water on the bar had been increased from six feet to twenty-one feet.

THERAPIA, 1 Sept. 1873.

COLONEL GORDON, GALATZ:

I have received the following telegram from nubar pasha sir Samuel Baka etant de retour le Kedive disereroit s'assures les services du Colonel Gordon pour organiser pays haut nil, et poursuivre suppression de la traite ne sachant pas si Colonel Gordon est encore au Danube le Kedive m'a chargé de recourrir a votre excellence pour s'enquerir s'il accepterait cette mission et ces fonctions.

H. ELLIOT.

On this telegraph form is written with a red pencil, "exped à M. le Colonel. Tuescha." (Signature undecipherable.) There is an indorsement in Sir Henry Gordon's hand: "Sir Henry Elliott ambassador writing to Gordon, offering to Gordon to go to take Baker's place."

CAIRO.

Colonel Gordon comissaire gouvernement anglais pour Comission Danube.

Son altesse a été heureuse de votre lettre et acceptation le gouvernement anglais vous accordera lautorisation que son altesse a fait demander dés que vous le demandez vousmém formelement et directement au ministre de la guerre.

GENERAL GORDON

j'ai repondu a votre lettre mais attendu feriez bien de faire votre demande pour autorisation.

NUBAR.

[Indorsed by Sir Henry Gordon] "Nubar Pacha's telegraph to Gordon deciding his leaving Danube for Equator."

I have Gordon's own copy of Beke's "British Captives in Abyssinia." The frontispiece of this work is a picture of a British captive at Magdala, chained hand and foot, and watched by a native armed with a spear and shield. Underneath Gordon has written in pencil, "I got well out of Johannis power." Johannis was the king of Abyssinia. In 1879 Gordon was sent to him on a mission by the Khedive. The following brief account by Gordon of his lieutenant-general, Romulus Gessi, I inserted in part in my book. Some lines I suppressed, lest they might give that brave soldier offense. He died, however, of the hardships he had undergone before the publication took place.

"NOTE. Romulus Gessi aged 49 short compact figure, cool most determined man, born genius for practical ingenuity in mechanics. ought to have been born in 1600 not 1832. Piratical disposition same as Francis Drake; has been engaged in many petty political affairs, was Interpreter to H. M. Forces in Crimea in 1854–55,

born at Multcha [?] Italian subject one day with £1000 another with ½d.

"He is Liva [?] Pacha (General Brigade Pacha), he is 2nd Class of Osmanli order."

How great a curse European discovery and European trade have brought on Africa is shown in the following brief note in Gordon's autograph: —

"I mentioned that the slave districts were entered first by an Englishman; the trade never was so great before, as it became after the voyages of Petherick related in this book.[1] *He* opened the country, and these Ivory stations he created rapidly became slave centres, such as Baker describes in his Albert Nyanza. C. G. G."

In another note, speaking of the end of his first term of command, Gordon says, "I returned with the sad conviction that no good could ever be done in these parts, and that it would have been better had Sir S. Baker's expedition never been sent." The discoverer and the missionary have generally gone before the trader, while the trader has too often been followed by the slave-dealer, who spreads desolation far and wide. Less than forty years ago, along the banks of the Upper Nile, for hundreds of miles, were thriving villages where Gordon found only a waste. Even in those parts of Africa where the kidnapper has not penetrated,

[1] *Egypt, the Soudan, and Central Africa*, by John Petherick.

the white man, following in the steps of the discoverer and the missionary, has introduced his poisonous spirits, adding one more horror to the savage life of the tropics. "I do not much wish well to discoveries," wrote Johnson, "for I am always afraid that they will end in conquest and robbery." Horace Walpole tells of a black servant, a remarkably sensible man, who had lived in England many years. His mistress was having read aloud to her the account of the Pelew Islands. "Somebody happened to say we were sending a ship thither; the black, who was in the room, exclaimed, 'Then there is an end of their happiness.'"

IV

To many people the word "autograph" means nothing more than the signature of a man more or less eminent. A collection of autographs they regard as only a collection of signatures, and for signatures they care nothing at all. Nevertheless, the mere name of a great man, written with that right hand which for many a long year served him so well, may raise thoughts in us such as naturally pass across the mind as we wander through Westminster Abbey. I often think that the last place whither a man should wish his friends to go, when their thoughts dwell not unkindly on his memory, would be his grave. On it his mind, so long as it is in a healthy state, never meditates: "Homo liber de nulla re minus quam de morte cogitat." Still less has the man whose soul the truth has made free thought of the place of his burial. Not round his grave, not in a country churchyard or a town cemetery, would a scholar's spirit willingly hover. In his study, among his beloved books, we might indeed fancy it dwelling. In his name, not as it has been carved by the stone-mason, but as it stands written by his own living hand, something of his

old self is still seen. So strongly does the mere handwriting sometimes bring before me those who have long mouldered in the dust that there are some signatures which I could not bear to keep in my collection, such horror would they excite. I could never look at the name of Philip II., or Mary, — Bloody Mary, I mean, — or Alva, or Torquemada, or Charles IX. without a shudder, as I recalled the awful sufferings to which, by the few letters traced by each of those cruel wretches, so many a noble spirit had been consigned. Their graves I could pass by with cold indifference, or, if my feelings were at all aroused, with a certain sense of exultation that at last the world had been rid of them forever.

To the bare autographs of famous men, when unsupported by anything interesting in what is written, we may apply the old saying, " He who would bring home the wealth of the Indies must carry the wealth of the Indies with him." A showman, it is said, who was exhibiting a panorama of Egypt, described the pyramids as having been built by several eminent persons long since deceased. Much the same description would be given by an ignorant fellow who glanced over a collection of signatures of men, however famous they might have been. But let it be set before a man whose mind has been made full by reading: what associations are at once aroused, what chains

of memory are at once woven! How rich a stream of anecdotes would have flowed forth over it from Macaulay's lips, each one beginning with, "Don't you remember?" as if he did not for one moment doubt that his listener's memory was as vast as his own. An old publisher told me that Macaulay called at his father's office one day, to talk over the publication of Horace Walpole's letters. He came, he said, merely to express his regret that he could not himself edit them. The publisher begged him to sit down, but he refused, saying that he had an engagement which would not allow him to stay. In spite of his haste he began to speak of Walpole and his times, and then, leaning on the back of a chair, which his listener in vain kept urging him to put to its proper use, for nearly two hours he heaped anecdote on anecdote, and criticism on criticism. We are none of us Macaulays; nevertheless, a collector of autographs who has something of a literary turn — without such a turn, to collect them is ridiculous — can clothe these scraps of handwriting with some semblance of life by illustrations drawn from a wide range of reading.

If I were a professor of English literature in a university, from time to time I would select a scholarly letter full of names, quotations, and allusions, which I would set the members of my class, each in the best way he could, to edit. Such a

task continued term after term would do much towards making the real student acquainted with books. While his indolent companions would have turned to biographical dictionaries, and would have gathered only what was already collected, he would have gone to original sources. Many a time he would have gone in vain; but in those cases he would have got his reward, like the old man's sons who dug up the field in the hope of finding the hidden treasure. Even a mere set of signatures might be made the centre of an interesting study. Round the names, for instance, of the worthies of Boston, what anecdotes, what varied judgments passed on them by friend and foe alike, might be made to cluster! I take pleasure sometimes in bringing together names in odd contrast. Thus I have the signature of Alexis de Tocqueville. This I set by a letter of Louis Blanc, and I recall the passage in which De Tocqueville describes the wild scene in the Constituent Assembly, when, on May 15, 1848, the mob broke in upon the sitting, and swarmed over the floor of the House. From his bench he watched Louis Blanc carried up and down in triumph on the shoulders of some of the rioters. "Ils le tenaient par ses petites jambes au-dessus de leurs têtes; je le vis qui faisait de vains efforts pour leur échapper, il se repliait et se tordait de tous les côtés sans pouvoir glisser d'entre leurs mains,

tout en parlant d'une voix étranglée et stridente; il me faisait l'effet d'un serpent auquel on pince la queue. On le posa enfin sur un banc au-dessous du mien. Je l'entendis qui criait: 'Mes amis, le droit que vous venez de conquérir . . .' Le reste de ses paroles se perdit dans le bruit."

Louis Blanc's letter, of no interest in itself, is dated "Le 6 Mars, 1870," and ends, "Je vous serre la main." Late in May or early in June of the following year, the young man whose hand the old Socialist had thus grasped in the spirit came to my house. He found me sitting by an open window. How well I recall the quiet, sunny look of the meadows and the deep shadow of the trees, that fine summer afternoon! It all imprinted itself on my memory through the strong contrast into which it was suddenly brought, when my unexpected visitor began to describe the scenes of violence through which he had just passed. He had been rash enough to take part in the mad rising of the Commune. When the troops forced their way into Paris, he had found a hiding-place in a house close to the Luxembourg, where many of the insurgents were imprisoned. Day after day he had heard the volleys with which his comrades were swept out of the world. Every hour he feared his turn would come. He had been saved by an Englishman, who brought him a suit of English-made

Alexis de Tocqueville

clothes, a large umbrella such as every Englishman is supposed to carry, a Bradshaw's Continental Guide, and a pair of dark spectacles. Fortunately, he spoke our language with perfect ease. Thus equipped, furnished with his friend's passport and accompanied by a genuine John Bull, the night before he came to see me he had passed undiscovered, first at the railway station at Paris, and next on the quay at Boulogne, through a long double line of watchful detectives. He chattered away in English as carelessly as he could, and was not unsparing of that ejaculation which was one of the two words that Dumas's Mousquetaire had been able to retain in his memory: "D'Artagnan dit au patron, *Come*. C'était, avec *Goddam*, tout ce qu'il avait pu retenir de la langue anglaise."

Brougham and Macaulay meet quietly enough in my collection, who in life never met with friendly feeling. Of Macaulay I have nothing but the fragment of a letter with the signature. Of Brougham I have two letters, neither of any interest, — one unsigned, the other signed H. B. When, on being made Lord Chancellor, he was raised to the peerage, he did not, according to the invariable custom, drop his Christian name in his signature. He wished, perhaps, to show the unwillingness with which he left the House of Commons, the scene of his triumphs and his strength.

I once had in my hands a letter written by him, in which he furnished one more instance, where instances are so common, that the extremes of skepticism and credulity are often found in the same mind. The extent of his skepticism I learnt from an old man to whom he said, "You Unitarians swallow the whole bull, and stick at the two horns." His credulity he showed by asking a friend to make some inquiries about a quack who advertised the discovery of a secret by which life could be prolonged to a hundred years. "I do not suppose," Brougham wrote, "there is anything in it, but it might be worth while to inquire." Perhaps his credulity was a sign that dotage was setting in, for it was in his old age that he wrote. In the Correspondence of Macvey Napier, the second editor of the "Edinburgh Review," Brougham and Macaulay are brought together in comical contrast. Brougham, as every one knows, was one of the founders of the "Review;" Macaulay raised it to the full height of its splendid fame. Each man, without the slightest reserve, confided to his friend the editor his hatred and his contempt of his brother contributor. "As for Brougham," wrote Macaulay, "he has reached that happy point at which it is equally impossible for him to gain character or to lose it." "Macaulay," wrote Brougham, "is absolutely renowned in society as the greatest bore that ever yet ap-

peared. I have seen people come in from Holland House breathless and knocked up, and able to say nothing but, 'Oh dear! oh mercy!' 'What's the matter?' being asked. 'Oh, Macaulay!' Then every one said, 'That accounts for it, — you're lucky to be alive.'" Sydney Smith, that other founder and pillar of the great "Review," in the character he drew of Mackintosh has, no doubt, a sly hit at Macaulay. "Mackintosh's memory," he wrote, "vast and prodigious as it was, he so managed as to make it a source of pleasure and instruction, rather than that dreadful engine of colloquial oppression into which it is sometimes erected." Emerson, who, unlike Sydney Smith, was a good listener, discovered none of this oppression when he met Macaulay. "He is," he wrote, "the king of diners-out. I do not know when I have seen such wonderful vivacity. He has the strength of ten men, immense memory, fun, fire, learning, politics, manners, and pride, and talks all the time in a steady torrent. You would say he is the best type of England." Brougham's manners are thus described by Ticknor, who met him and two bishops at Lord Fitzwilliam's dinner-table: "I never saw anybody so rude in respectable society in my life. Some laughed, some looked sober about it, but all thought it was outrageous." Miss Martineau had also met him at dinner. "He talked excessively

fast," she wrote, "and ate fast and prodigiously, stretching out his long arm for any dish he had a mind to, and getting hold of the largest spoons which would dispatch the most work in the shortest time."

Between Macaulay's somewhat slovenly signature and a fragment of a letter which contains no more words than, "Farewell, dear children. From your loving father, John Bright," I like to place Palmerston's name, in that strong, bold handwriting so characteristic of the man. "Of all English statesmen," writes Sir George Trevelyan, "Macaulay liked him the best." In the House of Commons Palmerston once made an insolent attack on John Bright, who was striving to keep England out of the madness of the Crimean war. He sneered at him as "the honorable and reverend gentleman." "For the first and last time in his life Macaulay had nothing to say for his hero." A correspondent of the "Daily News," who had known Bright well, wrote on his death: "There was one great Englishman of whom I never heard Mr. Bright say a good word, — Lord Palmerston. Antagonism to Lord Palmerston and to the Palmerstonian policy at home and abroad was one of the most rooted sentiments in his heart."

To the man and his policy Cobden was as much opposed as Bright. On March 23, 1858, he

wrote: "During my experience, the higher classes never stood so high in relative social and political rank, as compared with other classes, as at present. The middle classes have been content with the very crumbs from their table. The more contempt a man like Palmerston (as intense an aristocrat at heart as any of them) heaped on them, the louder they cheered him." Mr. John Morley, writing of Mr. Gladstone, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer in Palmerston's ministry, says: "It is true that to one powerful member of the Cabinet its military policy, now and after, was as abhorrent as it was to Cobden himself, who wrestled with his conscience by day and by night as to the morality of his position, and who only escaped from his own reprobation by the hope that in a balance of evils he had chosen the course which led to the less of them."

Here then we have four statesmen, all men of high character, strong judgment, and extraordinary ability, all nearly of the same age, all belonging to the Liberal party, passing judgment on a contemporary whose career they had the fullest opportunity of studying. Who can wonder that Plutarch's and Shakespeare's Brutus, "the noblest Roman of them all," is placed by Dante with Judas Iscariot in the lowest pit of hell, and that the characters of Cæsar and Cicero are still one of the cockpits of history, when he finds that our

great historian's hero among the statesmen of his own time was a man whom Bright and Cobden abhorred, and under whom Gladstone served with a troubled conscience? The judgment of Englishmen has slowly swung round, and Macaulay's hero is a hero no longer. When we reflect on this fallen idol, we may well be excused if at times a fear steals over us lest the foundations of the noble monuments which the historian has raised to William of Orange and the Earl of Chatham are laid, not on rock, but on sand.

In striking contrast with this group of men, all gifted, in addition to their other qualities, with strong common sense, is the Socialist and enthusiast, Robert Owen. In his autograph letter there is nothing worth quoting. In the year 1828, Charles Knight, the publisher and author, thus wrote about him to one of my uncles: "Owen has been in town with a grand new scheme for the Mexican government giving him a *Sovereignty* — the province of Texas — for a small coöperative experiment! He wants Cuba and Canada for the same object. He has been drawing up a memorial about the Texas affair, and swears he shall do the job." His Brook Farm he did indeed plan on a most glorious scale. Daniel Webster's vast, wild, illimitable Texas was too small for this earthly paradise. About this time, Rowland Hill, who had not yet turned

his thoughts towards postal reform, was eager to found a coöperative community. Owen urged him to take part with him in establishing one in America. I do not know whether the whole of Texas was dangled before his eyes; enough was shown him to make him look upon the scheme as visionary. A small English parish would have been to him what Texas, Canada, and Cuba were to Owen. He almost succeeded in getting hold of one where he would have founded his "social community." Unfortunately, in the middle of the village stood a public house which was not for sale. There cannot be a public house among the many mansions even of an earthly paradise, and so this English forerunner of Brook Farm came to nothing.

Owen had tried to win over Miss Martineau to his views. "Having," she writes, "still strong hopes of Prince Metternich for a convert, he might well have hopes of me. His certainty that we might make life a heaven, and his hallucinations that we are going to do so immediately, under his guidance, have caused his wisdom to be overlooked in his absurdity." He once told my father of a scheme he had for remodeling all the towns of the world. Henceforth all mankind was to live in parallelograms. So convinced was he of the vast merits of his plan that he assured my father that within three years of its publication

London would be a desert, the whole population having migrated, east, west, south, and north, to suburban parallelograms. Southey coupled him with Clarkson, the Garrison of West Indian emancipation, and Bell, the advocate of a new system of popular education. "Such men," he says, "are not only eminently useful, but eminently happy also; they live in an atmosphere of their own, which must be more like that of the third heaven than of this every-day earth in which we toil and moil."

It is a long stride from Robert Owen, with his wild scheme for Texas, Canada, and Cuba, to Ismail Pacha, who for a brief space managed to add to his dominions a vast district of Central Africa. General Gordon, to whom the autograph note in my collection was written by the Khedive, had all Owen's simplicity and benevolence, and much of his enthusiasm, with the addition — the strange addition to such an assemblage of qualities — of the strongest common sense. The Khedive's note, written on thick paper, adorned with his monogram in gilt surmounted by a gilt crown, is brief. It was, no doubt, a New Year's greeting sent from Cairo to the Soudan. He wrote: —

LA FAVORITE, le 4 janvier, 1880.

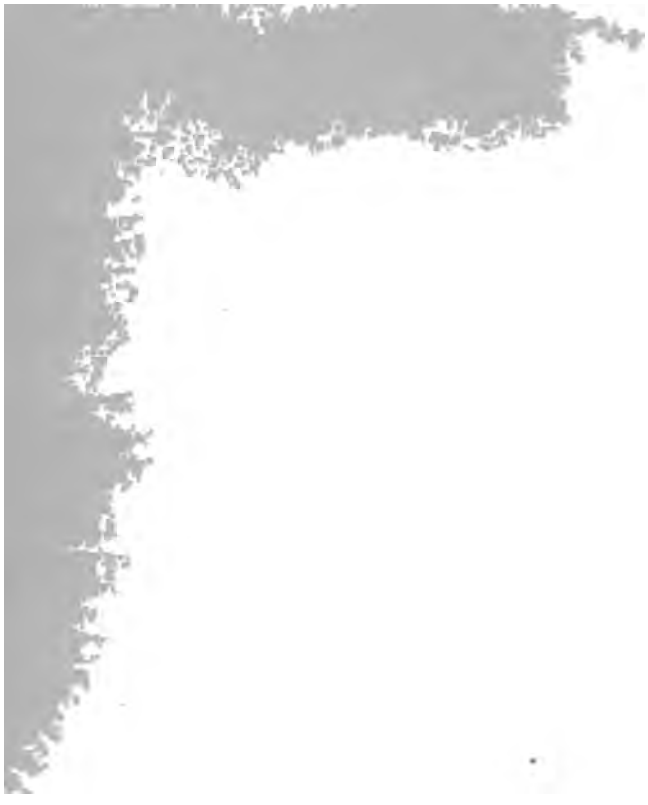
recevez, mon cher Gordon Pacha, l'expression de ma haute estime et de toute mon amitié.

ISMAIL.

La favorite le 4 Janvier 1880

Recevez, mon cher Gordon pacha,
l'expression de ma haute estime
et de toute mon amitié

Ismaïl



La Favorite was, I think, one of the Khedive's palaces.

A far worthier ruler than this Khedive was Benito Juarez, President of the Mexican republic, Indian or half-caste though he was. His signature was given me many years ago by the son of a wealthy merchant of Mexico, who, in the frequent revolutions, had escaped plunder by the supplies which he always furnished to the needs of all parties alike when their side was down. He found it far cheaper, he told me, to support the needy than to bribe the powerful. So uncertain was the tenure of office, so great and sudden were the blows of fortune, that, even if gratitude were silent, prudence protected him from being plundered by men who at the next turn of the wheel might be reduced from splendor to beggary. In those days there was not a single bank in Mexico; checks and bank-notes were unknown, payments being always made in specie. For the requirements of foreign trade there was a constant transmission of silver dollars between the capital and the port. The safe conveyance of this treasure was secured by a guard of soldiers. My friend the merchant once lamented to me the loss of a large sum. It was no corporal or sergeant who proved faithless, nor even a lieutenant or a captain; a general turned brigand and decamped with the dollars.

From the Mexican President I turn to the first President of the United States. In my earliest childhood my father instilled into me such a veneration of that great man that, when I was a schoolboy of the age of eight or nine, I once angered my little comrades by crying out, "I wish I was an American, for then I should be a countryman of George Washington!" It has long been enough for me to be an Englishman. This autograph is nothing more than an order for payment, but it is all in Washington's hand, and is the more interesting as it was written in the last year of his life. It runs as follows:—

MOUNT VERNON May 16th, 1799

The Cashier of the Office of Discount & Deposit, Baltimore, Will please pay Wm Greetham Esqr or bearer the sum of Three Hundred & Seventy one dollars Nineteen cents and chg the same to My Acct

Go[1] WASHINGTON

371 $\frac{19}{100}$ Dolls

In my collection, by the side of this autograph, I always keep one of the stamps which George III. and his worthless ministers, supported by a Parliament which far more represented the king

[1] I am not sure what the letter is that follows G, if indeed it is a letter, and not a flourish.

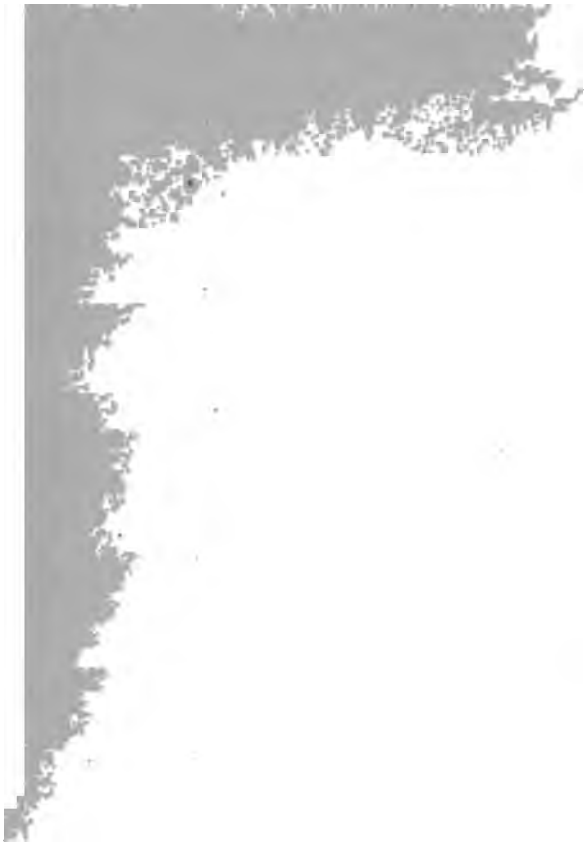
Mount Vernon May 16th 1799

The Cashier of the
Office of Discount & Deposit Baltimore

Will please pay Dr. Greenham Esqr
or Bearer the sum of Three Hundred & seventy
one dollars Nineteen cents and chg the same
to My acct

371 19/100 Dolls

G. Washington



than the people, attempted to force on the American colonies. On the top of the face of the stamp is printed "America," with the legend "Honi Soit Qui Mal Y Pense" round a crown, and "ii S. vi P." below. In the middle is a small metal plate. On the reverse, which is covered with gum, are the letters "G. R." on each side of a crown, and the numbers 3 and 178. This stamp, with a few others, was found either in the London post-office or in the stamp-office (I forget which), and was given by Sir Rowland Hill to my father. The Stamp Act was carried after "the most languid debate" Edmund Burke had ever heard. Hume wrote to a friend, soon after Parliament met, "I think there is all the probability that this will prove a quiet session, and there is a general tranquillity established in Europe, so that we have nothing to do but cultivate letters." Nothing at this time disturbed the mind of the philosopher but "the mad and wicked rage of the English against the Scots," which was likely, he feared, to lessen the reputation of his history. "There has been nothing of note in Parliament," said Horace Walpole the same year, "but one slight day on the American taxes." Six weeks later, he wrote: "I don't remember the day when I was reduced to complain, in winter and Parliament-tide, of having nothing to say. There has not been an event, from a debate to a wedding,

capable of making a paragraph. Such calms," he added, with what now looks like prophetic insight, "often forerun storms." The silly young king was so little aware of the mischief he was doing that, in the speech with which he prorogued Parliament, he described the session as "this season of tranquillity." The House of Lords, however, had not been careless of the tranquillity of America. On March 6 of the year when the Stamp Act was passed, the keeper of the Sun Tavern in the Strand was summoned to their bar, and examined about an exhibition in his house of two Indian warriors. He assured their lordships "that they had had their meals regularly, and drank nothing stronger than small beer." The House resolved "that the bringing from America any of the Indians who are under his Majesty's protection, without proper authority for so doing, may tend to give great dissatisfaction to the Indian nations, and be of dangerous consequence to his Majesty's subjects residing in the colonies." When, eight or nine years later, Lord Chesterfield's Letters were published, the following passage was suppressed: "The repeal of the Stamp Act was carried in both Houses by the ministers, against the king's declared inclinations, which is a case that has seldom happened, and I believe seldom will happen." It is a curious fact that the editor had not the courage to print these words.

If George III. did his best to crush patriots in America, he pensioned one in Europe. I have a long letter written by the Corsican hero, Pascal Paoli, who lived in England for nearly forty years on a noble pension from the crown. In the king's eyes he had atoned for the guilt of fighting for liberty by fighting against the French. The French, in their turn, who crushed the rising liberties of the Corsicans, on the other side of the Atlantic supported the young American commonwealth. Rousseau, in his anger at their invasion of Corsica, wrote of the French, " S'ils savaient un homme libre à l'autre bout du monde, je crois qu'ils y iraient pour le seul plaisir de l'exterminer." It was not as friends of freedom, but as enemies of England, that they supported the United States. Individual Frenchmen, such as La Fayette, were inspired, no doubt, by a love of liberty, just as, a few years earlier, individual Englishmen had been inspired by the same love to send a supply of arms to Paoli. When I was in Corsica I was shown Paoli's house, with its window shutters lined with thick layers of cork to keep out the bullets of assassins. He never mastered our tongue, as his letter shows. That he did not speak it much more correctly than he wrote it we can see by the following record, by Miss Burney, of the account he gave her of Boswell's visit to him in Corsica: " He came to my country, and he fetched me some

letter of recommending him; but I was of the belief that he might be an impostor, and I supposed in my minte he was an espy; for I look away from him, and in a moment I look to him again, and I behold his tablets. Oh! he was to the work of writing down all I say. Indeed I was angry. But soon I discover he was no impostor and no espy; and I only find I was myself the monster he had come to discern. Oh! he is a very good man; I love him indeed; so cheerful, so gay, so pleasant! but at the first, oh! I was indeed angry."

The date of the letter is not given, but it must have been written soon after the battle of the Nile: —

My Dear Miss Mainard, — Much indebted, indeed, to Miss Jones for having made an apology with you for my seemingly neglect to answer the letters you honored me with since a long time.

The pain I feel to write, or read since that time I got the contagious disease which our victory in egypt brought over to england, a melancholy truth it is that every time the europeans go to any of the three quarters of the Globe with an hostile force, by sad merited penance they come back with some malady which continues incurable for along period of time. I consulted many Physicians — oculists in vain, the obstinacy of my com-

plaint has baffled all their skill and ointments. I cannot read two pages of a book or write a letter without feeling such a pressure in my Eyes which obliges me to stop for a quarter of an hour. I hope it wont be so now, as I hope this answer to your last letters may dissipate the injurious doubt you seem to have entertained that I would have forgot the many obligations I owe to kindness and friendship you had for me in so many occasions when I was at Clifton, where without your kind assistance I never would have been acquainted with the beaties of the country about, or with the persons of the best sort and caracters. Among those I shall always be proud of the acquaintance of the worthy Colonnel [illegible] to whom I pray you to make agreable my best compliments. My dear you have a write to call yourself my *niece* with our commons friends, as with them speaking of you I have always used the very same appellation. Very seldom I ride on the Coach upon the Pavement nor can I walk at such a distance as St. James Street; but after what you hint me of the Pictures of M^r^ Right, I will go there though I am unacquainted, but your name shall be my passport. If I get admittance I shall feel sadly the imperfection of my sight. I am not a judge of Pictures, but I could have said something about those which form a great deal of the merit of M^r^ Wright. In my country the mountains are

very conspicuous and very little inferiors to [illegible] or if you please to call it with his ancient name [illegible], or the highest of the Alps —

Mr Rich was but a child when I frequented the house of her worthy mother, nevertheless I am vastly proud for the remembrance she entertains of me, and hope you will be so good by to make her agreable my respectful returns of compliments. I don't doubt She and Daughters have inherited the talents of mind and the charming of the conversation of Mr Draper, and dont wonder that they are the first rate Constellations among the Beaty of Clifton. Our acquaintance if he succeed to emancipate his country will have a singular place in the temple of fame, if unsuccessful will hav a [illegible] of the sincere Lovers of Liberty [illegible] of the scriblers of the Day. Adieu my dear Neice read if [illegible] thy servant.

De P.

I have in my collection two or three poems and letters of Mrs. Hemans, addressed to Paoli's niece by adoption, Miss Maynard, of Clifton. On one occasion she sends her friend her inscription for the Waterloo Column. With a feeling of modesty rarely found in a poet, she does not think it right to inflict both poetry and postage on her correspondent. Above the address of her letter she has written, " Three sheets. Post paid." Be-

low there is marked in red ink, no doubt by the postmaster, "P^d 2 s. 9. d." Two shillings and ninepence would certainly have been a heavy price to pay for such lines as the following, even though they are in the poet's autograph: —

"Soldier! whose eyes this trophied stone survey
Graced with the tale of England's proudest day;
Here, at the shrine whose deathless records tell
In freedom's battle how the valiant fell;
Here be thy vows of patriotism poured,
Here to thy country consecrate the sword."

Our grandmothers greatly admired Mrs. Hemans, almost adored her. To our grandfathers she was not quite so dear. There were not a few among them who would have agreed with Sir Walter Scott when he wrote, "Mrs. Hemans is somewhat too poetical for my taste, — too many flowers, I mean, and too little fruit, — but that may be the cynical criticism of an elderly gentleman."

In one of her letters, dated "Daventry, 5th March," she says: "I am constantly wishing that some fortunate occurrence would transport us into your part of the world; the people here (with the exception I have just mentioned) are remarkably inhospitable, and from what I have seen of them, however earnestly I may wish for society, I certainly cannot consider it as any deprivation not to be welcomed into *theirs*. You know that the society at St. Asaph is by no means distinguished

for its intelligence, but I can assure you it is in every respect far superior to that of Daventry."

Falstaff's red-nosed innkeeper of Daventry seems to invest this little country town with something of an hospitable air; but perhaps his red nose and hospitality were strictly personal and professional. Of the bishop's palace at St. Asaph, Johnson, who had visited it many years earlier, wrote, "They have a library, and design a room." It would seem that the bishop, though he had books, had no place in which to keep them. It is not, therefore, surprising that in Mrs. Hemans's time "St. Asaph was by no means distinguished for its intelligence." It had once boasted of a great deal of intelligence in William Lloyd, one of the seven bishops who were sent to the Tower by James II. Of him a brother bishop said that "he had the most learning in ready cash of any he ever knew." But "times and seasons they must change," and red-nosed innkeepers and quick-witted and learned bishops alike must "pass away."

The following letter I received from Mr. John Forster in acknowledgment of some notes I had sent him on his Life of Oliver Goldsmith. The engravings were two portraits of that great patriot Sir John Eliot, who died a lingering death in the Tower, a victim of the cruelty of Charles I. One of the pictures, taken on the eve of his imprison-

ment, represents him in full health; the other, painted a few days before his death, shows a body wasted with disease and suffering. In mid-winter he had written to John Hampden, "My lodgings are removed, and I am now where candle-light may be suffered, but scarce fire." "To the end that a likeness might be preserved of him in the condition to which he had been brought by his imprisonment, he sent for a painter to the Tower. He was to paint him exactly as he was; his friends, so long denied access to him, were to see again the familiar face as the last few months had changed it; and his family were to keep the picture on the walls at Port Eliot 'as a perpetual memorial of his hatred of tyranny.' So the tradition has been preserved from generation to generation of his descendants." His son petitioned the king for leave to lay his father to rest among his dead ancestors. "Whereto was answered, at the foot of the petition, 'Lett Sir John Eliot's body be buried in the Churche of that parish where he dyed.' And so he was buried in the Tower." When I remember Eliot's sufferings and death, I rejoice in the thought that not many years were to pass by before it was seen that it was no lying vision which had passed before the eyes of the great Puritan poet when he uttered the stern threat, —

"That two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."

PALACE GATE HOUSE, KENSINGTON W.
8th April, 1874.

MY DEAR SIR, — Thank you for the list, which contains what will be useful to me.

As to Boswell I do not think that any one has done him greater justice than myself. Certainly no one has more honestly endeavoured to do it — but I hardly think I shall agree in the kind of estimate of him which you hint at.

The "Saturday Review" was good enough to discover lately that I was not a Boswell — and I somehow felt it to be a compliment even from that quarter.

Yet I would rather have his book than any other single work published in these last two centuries.

The engravings are gone to-day to Messrs. Chapman and Hall, 193 Piccadilly, and perhaps you will kindly send for them as soon as you conv^ly can.

Very truly yours,
JOHN FORSTER.

B. HILL, ESQ.

I wonder what has become of the million and more copies of "Tupper's Proverbial Philosophy" which were scattered over England and America? Of one copy, finely bound in best morocco, I can tell the fate. It had been given to my wife,

on leaving school, by one of her companions; for in those days of the world's innocence young ladies adored the mild Tupper. One idle morning, discovering this handsome volume on a bookshelf, I held a secret court of justice, and condemned it to much the same end as befell Don Quixote's books of chivalry. I had constituted myself sheriff and executioner as well as judge and jury; so I heated the poker red-hot, and bored the pages through. The covers I left uninjured. I then restored the book to its proper place, where it slumbered peacefully for some months, or perhaps years. A day came at last when our first-born, having taken it down to use it as a brick in building a house, brought it, with awestricken eyes, to her mother. In my undergraduate days I once heard Mr. Swinburne mock his brother bard by playfully maintaining that he had seen a book advertised with the title "The Poet, the Proverbialist, and the Philosopher, or Selections from the Writings of Solomon, Shakespeare, and Martin F. Tupper." Of such a selection and such a title Tupper would have been quite capable. In a free rendering of "Non omnis moriar" he joins himself with Horace and Shakespeare, as all three destined to immortality. A slight but amusing instance of his vanity was told me by a friend of mine, who was taking part in the election of the representatives to Parliament

of the University of Oxford. Tupper, who had come up to vote, with an air of importance had given in his name. The official, not catching it, asked him to repeat it. With great dignity, but yet with a certain plaintive tone, as if such a question should not have had to be put to so famous a man, he deliberately said, "Martin Farquhar Tupper, the poet." Of the vanity shown in the following letter his was not a solitary instance: a poetess, who had not mastered enough of her art to count on her fingers the number of feet in her verses, was convinced, like him, that Gordon, beset as he was in Khartoum, would be cheered by her poetry, if only I could manage to break through the blockade and transmit it to him. Tupper wrote as follows: —

UNDERHILL, CINTRA PARK,
UPPER NORWOOD,
Sep. 9, 1884.

DEAR SIR, — I am deep in your most interesting "autotype" of the great and good Gordon, and commend you heartily for your wise and true book. In proof that I am fully of your mind as to the hero I send you enclosed my latest stave in his honour (having written several, published in the "Globe," "Morning Post," etc.), and if by possibility you can get one of these to reach him at Khartoum it might help to cheer him.

I would give you other staves of mine about

D. G. ROSSETTI. DRAWN BY HIMSELF

Gordon, but I cannot lay hands on them; if you care to see them I could perhaps tell you the newspaper dates when they appeared.

Believe me to be

Truly your well-wisher,

MARTIN F. TUPPER.

G. B. HILL, ESQ.

In my undergraduate days, a friendly band of young pre-Raphaelite painters, as a work of love, covered the walls of the new debating-room of the Oxford Union Society with frescoes, and the ceiling with a graceful pattern. The leaders among these enthusiasts were Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Arthur Hughes, Edward Burne-Jones, William Morris, and Valentine Prinsep. Unhappily, they began to paint when the walls were not thoroughly dry; before many years had gone by the frescoes were almost ruined by the dampness. Rossetti left his work incomplete. Throughout his life it sometimes, I fear, happened that he did not finish even the pictures for which he was paid, if he had received the money in advance. That which had been begun in enthusiasm was little likely to bind him fast. The undergraduates were not satisfied with an imperfect panel, and in their simplicity, hired a man to complete the great painter's work. In one of the patterns on the ceiling Rossetti had drawn a comical likeness of

William Morris. It was so inconspicuous that it was little likely to be discovered by any chance observer. I often pointed it out to my friends, till a summer vacation came when the undergraduates had the whole ceiling repainted, with as much indifference as if the original work had been done by a set of oil-and-color men.

In June, 1858, I rowed down the Thames from Oxford to a village on the outskirts of London, in company with Mr. Morris and another friend. With the improvidence of youth, by the time we reached Henley we had spent all our money. One of the three had a watch-chain, on which he raised enough to enable us, with close economy, to continue our voyage. The weather was unusually hot. I have not forgotten the longing glances cast on a large basket of strawberries at Henley, and on many a tavern on the bank as we rowed by, as effectually constrained as ever was Ulysses not to listen to their siren call. It was through no earthly paradise that the young poet and artist and his companions passed on the afternoon of their last day. When we reached the landing-stage where we were to leave our boat, our common stock of money amounted to just one penny. We were still seven or eight miles from our destination; but by neither train nor omnibus would our empty pockets allow us to travel, so we hired a cab, the fare of which we could pay when

we reached our friends. We were, I well remember, in some alarm lest we should have to pass through a toll-gate. Though these gates were common enough in those days, our road, happily, lay clear of them. At last we arrived at one of the old houses in Red Lion Square, where Rossetti and Burne-Jones occupied the first story.[1] At night five mattresses were spread on the carpetless floor, and there I slept amidst painters and poets.

The following undated letter was written by Rossetti soon after the publication of the illustrated edition of Tennyson's Poems. "Ned" is Sir Edward Burne-Jones.

Tuesday.

DEAR ——: And how goes it with you? And are you going it still at your picture?

You know our little Exhibition opens here on Monday, and I want much to send the *Blue Closet*, as every one so advises. Could you get at it *at once* for me, and have it sent to London by *Friday* — to 4 Russell Place, Fitzroy Square? Will you now? Do. I am going to send several others, but I hardly know which yet.

Would you believe — but you will easily — that *The Seven Towers* is not done yet? However perhaps it may be at Russell Place still.

[1] It was the story above the ground floor; in America it is more properly called the second.

I 've got rid of its *black* stage I hope, and should have done it long ago, had it not been for interruptions, chiefly about this Exhibition. Nor have I done anything else. Should n't I like to come to Oxford, — and ain't I seedy! but I must touch up drawings now till Monday. *Friday* is the hanging day — so *Blue Closet* should be there by then.

You know no doubt of Ned's ups and downs. I hope he 's getting round — not in the wombat sense however — that seems far off indeed.

Let me hear from you.

Yours affectionately

D. G. Rossetti.

Have you seen the Tennyson? T. loathes mine.

The following letter was written to my father, a schoolmaster, by Lytton Bulwer, who was looking out for a school for his little son, the late Lord Lytton. What answer my father sent, I do not know; at all events, the boy was not put under his care. A century earlier, the Earl of Chesterfield had spared no pains in training his son for the career for which Bulwer destined his boy, but he had worse material to deal with. Young Stanhope rose to no higher post than that of envoy at the court of Dresden, while Lord Lytton, little more than thirty years after the date of his father's

Tuesday

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combat sense however
– that seems far off
indeed.

Let me hear from
you –

Yours affectionately
DG Rossetti

Have you seen the
Tennyson? I. Southey
mine.

letter, had gained the highest prize open to English diplomatists. He was our ambassador to the French republic. I offered to send him his father's letter when he was in Paris, thinking that he might care to use it in writing his life. The reply which he sent I subjoin.

SIR, — . . . May I further ask — 1st supposing a boy enter at the age of nine, with good abilities and an inclination towards study, — able to read, write and construe the easier French writers with some fluency, but ignorant of the rudiments of Latin — what will probably be his progress in the Classics and general attainments at the age of 12? and secondly at what age would you propose that he should learn to speak the principal modern languages — i. e. French, German, and Italian?

I may as well perhaps add in explanation of my own pertinacity on this last head, that I contemplate for this young pupil the career of Diplomacy — in which to speak French almost as a native is an absolute essential — and an accurate and fluent mastery of the other languages highly desirable.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Yr obliged Sert.
E. LYTTON BULWER.

POST OFFICE, CHELTENHAM,
Nov. 2, 1841.

Bulwer, it may be noticed, in writing "honor"

followed the American, and not the ordinary English spelling of that word.

BRITISH EMBASSY, PARIS,
Octr 4, 1873.

SIR, — Pray pardon my delay, occasioned by a heavy pressure of official business, in acknowledging the receipt of yr letter of the 20th ult. I am much obliged by yr considerate offer to allow me to look at the letter therein referred to as having been written by my father to yours. If you have no objection to forward it to the above address I will return it to you as soon as I have read it.

Yrs truly, LYTTON.

I have a touching memorial of a Polish exile who had escaped from his country after the unsuccessful rising of 1830. My father sought by preference his French masters among these unhappy men. One of them made the boys a farewell address at the prize-giving before the Christmas holidays. "And forever remember the banished Pole" were the last words I heard from my teacher. They touched me as a child, and, though it is nearly fifty years since I heard them, they touch me still. To an invitation to a dance he sent the following answer: —

"'Fain would he now have join'd the dance, the song;
But who may smile that sinks beneath his fate?'
(L. BYRON.)

"Miss —— and Mr. —— will have the kindness to excuse Bryzinski's absence at the evening party, since his wounds after leaving his home are not yet healed, and the view of enlivened company might cause him, by recalling the past, still greater pain under which he is continually labouring. All destroying time will perhaps calm his mournful heart, and then he will be able to share gayety of others, whereas now his sadness might be unpleasant and diminish the liveliness of enjoying company."

More than thirty years later my father received from him a far happier letter. He was no longer eating the bitter bread of exile. An amnesty had allowed him to return to his home.

V

By the kindness of a correspondent, who has read the first of my Talks, I am able to give Dr. Johnson's famous letter to Macpherson in the very words in which it was written. It differs somewhat from the copy which the brave old man dictated from memory to Boswell. That Macpherson should have preserved the original seems strange, but he was a man little troubled by shame. It was, to be sure, mainly by this letter that he was to gain such immortality as afterward fell to his lot; but this his vanity would not have led him to suspect. Johnson wrote as follows:—

MR. JAMES MACPHERSON, — I received your foolish and impudent note. Whatever insult is offered me I will do my best to repel, and what I cannot do for myself the law will do for me. I will not desist from detecting what I think a cheat from any fear of the menaces of a Ruffian.

You want me to retract. What shall I retract? I thought your book an imposture from the begining [*sic*], I think it upon yet surer reasons an imposture still. For this opinion I give the publick my reasons which I here dare you to refute.

But however I may despise you, I reverence truth, and if you can prove the genuineness of the work I will confess it. Your rage I defy, your abilities since your Homer are not so formidable and what I have heard of your morals disposes me to pay regard not to what you shall say, but what you can prove.

You may print this if you will.

SAM JOHNSON.

Jan. 20, 1775.
To Mr. JAMES MACPHERSON.

Gray, Hume, even for a short time Horace Walpole, had all believed in Macpherson and his Ossian. Burke, I have little doubt, was the reviewer, in the "Annual Register," who so finely, but so ignorantly, wrote of him, "The editor has recovered from the obscurity of barbarism, the rust of fifteen hundred years, and the last breath of a dying language, these inestimable relics of the genuine spirit of poetry." Gibbon, more than a full year after Johnson's exposure of the imposture, in his "Decline and Fall," paid Macpherson one of his stately compliments.

Powerful as was Johnson's frame, age and sickness had told on him. He was older than the "ruffian" whom he thus defied by almost thirty years. Macpherson was a strong man, too, "of a large size, with very thick legs, to hide which he generally wore boots, though not then the fash-

ion." His temper was not good. "I have scarce ever known," wrote Hume, "a man more perverse and unamiable." Against his threatened assault Johnson armed himself with an oaken cudgel, more than six feet long, but he never had to use it. The two men lie close together in Westminster Abbey. It was not on any public demand, but merely in compliance with a direction in his own will, that Macpherson found his grave there. So long as the fees for interment were paid, there was, it seems, no one to whom the dean and chapter, in those days, would have refused admittance. In Colonel Chester's Westminster Abbey Registers, in the long list of interments, next to Johnson's, separated from it by only two days, comes that of "Mrs. Elizabeth Broughton, wife of John Broughton, the celebrated pugilist." She, it is true, was not buried in Poets' Corner, but in the west cloisters. Her famous husband received in due course the same honor. Thirty years before this prize-fighter's death, when Robertson's History of Scotland and the second part of Hume's History of England were on the point of appearing, Hume wrote to his brother historian: "Next week I am published, and then I expect a constant comparison will be made between Dr. Robertson and Mr. Hume. I shall tell you in a few weeks which of these Heroes is likely to prevail. Meanwhile I can inform both of them, for their

comforts, that their combat is not likely to make half as much noise as that between Broughton and the one-eyed coachman." On prize-fighting the great lexicographer and moralist looked with favor. One of his uncles had kept the ring in Smithfield for a whole year. He was himself "very conversant in the art of boxing, and would descant upon it much to the admiration of those who had no expectation of his skill in such matters." Under less happy circumstances, he might himself have practiced the noble art. John Bright, so the story runs, coming out of the House of Commons after a hot debate on the game-laws, met in the lobby a great sportsman, Grantley Berkeley by name, who that night had been the champion of the country squires. "Mr. Berkeley," said Bright, "if you had not been born a gentleman, you would have been a poacher." "Mr. Bright," replied Berkeley, "if you had not been born a Quaker, you would have been a prize-fighter." So, in like manner, if Dr. Johnson had not been born, or at least bred, a scholar, there was that within him that might possibly have "exuberated" into a second Broughton.

The original of his famous letter to Macpherson once formed part of Mr. Lewis Pocock's great Johnsonian collection, which was scattered to the four quarters of heaven twenty years ago. I have heard an old dealer in autographs say that

a few days before the sale, it might have been bought as a whole for five or six hundred pounds, though, as it turned out, it fetched nearly thrice as much at the auction. Unbroken, it would have conferred distinction even on the noblest library; but dispersed, it diffuses more pride and pleasure. I never look at the sale catalogue without sighing over an editor's wasted opportunity. With what annotations might all these treasures have been set forth! How the circumstances in which each letter was written might have been explained, the allusions traced, and every difficulty cleared up! Many unpublished letters of Johnson have passed singly through my hands; for I have let the dealers know that, if they would allow me to see them, I would in each case, as a return, furnish elucidations. But what are letters which come dribbling in one by one compared with this noble collection? In these days, when autographs obtain such high, such extravagant prices, the preparation of the auctioneer's catalogue should surely be intrusted to a scholar, and not be left to the ignorant industry of a clerk. The poor man, no doubt, makes the best use he can of his Biographical Dictionary and his Lowndes's Bibliographical Manual, but far too often he confounds the persons and confuses the substance. In a catalogue that lies open before me I see entered a letter of Sir Arthur Welles-

ley's. His name, I suppose, could not be found in the auctioneer's Biographical Dictionary; at all events, it is clear that the good man did not discover that he was selling an autograph of the Duke of Wellington. I remember my father telling me that at the beginning of the Peninsular War he heard a great deal of Sir Arthur Wellesley, but that after a little while that commander's name was no longer mentioned, while everybody began to speak of Lord Wellington. Troubled at this sudden disappearance of his hero, he asked a schoolfellow what had become of the famous general. The lad, who was equally ignorant, replied that he believed he had gone to America, and that Lord Wellington had taken his place.

It sometimes happens that the ignorance of the auctioneer tells against the buyer. A letter described, in the catalogue just referred to, as written by James Boswell to his daughter Euphemia, was sold, a few years ago, for five guineas. The date, January, 1808, by which time poor Bozzy had been nearly thirteen years in his grave, shows that it was written by James Boswell, Junior, to his sister. It is interesting to observe that so late as 1884, in the eyes of one of the leading literary auctioneers of London, Tupper, with his likeness thrown in, held a higher place than Browning. The two poets are thus brought together in one lot: "Tupper (Martin). Autograph letter signed,

portrait; and others of Lord Houghton, Bernard Barton, R. Browning, &c." In the same catalogue, Blackstone is described, no doubt correctly so far as it goes, as "Blackstone (Sir William), distinguished Lawyer," while "our good Prince Eugene" of Southey's poem appears in two consecutive lots as "Eugène de Savoy, distinguished General," and as "Eugène (Prince de Savoie), distinguished Military Commander."

In my first Talk I mentioned the forged Byron letters which are in extensive circulation. My friend Mr. R. B. Adam, of Buffalo, informs me that, some years ago, one of these was sold to him. In this case the forger had not been so careful as usual; probably he had exhausted his stock of old paper. At all events, it was by the water-mark that the imposture was, before long, detected. The letter was returned to the dealer from whom it came, who, if he had been an honest man, would have nailed it to his counter, like a false piece of money. It was a second time put into circulation, and later on came once more to Mr. Adam through a different channel. The date, to be sure, was no longer at variance with the water-mark, but it was at a considerable sacrifice that this congruity had been obtained. As it now stood, the letter had been written a year or two after the writer's death. "An odd thought strikes me," said the dying Johnson: "we shall

receive no letters in the grave." Most certainly, if none are received, none are written there. It is not down below that the Dead Letter Office is to be found. In these days of psychical research, it may, for all I know, be maintained that it would be rash to conclude hastily, without serious and careful investigation, that a letter is a forgery, merely from the trifling circumstance that at the time it was written its alleged author had been for some while dead. Collectors of autographs, however, as a general rule, prefer that in every case the date should fall within the period of the writer's life.

In my second Talk, in quoting one of Matthew Arnold's letters, I said that "my readers must not infer from the address of this letter that Matthew Arnold, who was never weary of scoffing at the Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant Religion, lived in the Wesleyan Training College." This passage, which was quoted in the London "Daily News," elicited the following pleasant anecdote: "For more than twenty years Matthew Arnold spent a week, each December, in the examination of the students. It was his custom to occupy the same examination room; he would on no account change the old lecture hall for the newer and more commodious structure. His first request, after starting the examination, was invariably the loan of a

Bible and a candle. During the dark days of December he would write continuously, only now and then leaving his stool (he would not use the comfortable armchair occupied by other inspectors) to walk round the room, surveying the ceiling rather than the students. On one occasion, whilst busily engaged in writing, and whilst half turned from view of his charge, a visit was made to him by the chief of the Education Department. Playfully remarking that he was placing great trust in the students, Arnold replied, 'These students are Wesleyans; they never copy.' This reply of the inspector is a choice treasure of both students and tutors at Westminster. How tenaciously he clung to old associations is shown by the fact that, after he had retired from the inspectorate, he came as usual to the college the same week in December, just to renew, as he said, the old feeling, and see the old faces."

The following letter was written by Leigh Hunt to my uncle, the barrister, whom I have mentioned in a previous Talk: —

KENSINGTON, 12 min. to 5,
Sunday [April 9, 1848].

MY DEAR HILL, — With great vexation I sit down nearly at the time at which I ought to have been with you, to say that I am unable to come after all. I have done all I could to do otherwise; but perhaps the very steps I have taken went

LEIGH HUNT

counter to it. Perhaps, in the present state of my health, the mere irregularity of my having been forced to go to town yesterday on business, and walking somewhat after dinner, have disordered me, but so it is. It is no ordinary case of inability, believe me; much less of delay, etc. I finished dressing on purpose upwards of two hours ago. I ought not, you see, to have promised to come, for fear of subjecting myself to this chance of disconcerting you; but I did all I could to do as well as hope the best, and I could not resist such a combination of gentle invitations, — ladies and all conspiring. Therefore you must do your best for me in turn, and think the very sincerest (for they deserve it) of the intentions and regrets of

Yours most faithfully,

LEIGH HUNT.

P. S. I have had a carriage waiting for me at the door this hour, and could have found it in my heart to send this letter by it; — but —

I shall think of you all half the evening, and hope you are not devoting me to the infernal Gods.

Perhaps at this very dinner-party the knives were used with which my uncle, who was a man of great humor, had had his table furnished by a stratagem. For some while, so the story runs, he

had tried to convince his wife that their old set was well-nigh worn out. She, however, a "careful soul," like Mrs. Gilpin, thought they might serve a little longer. He gave up the contention, and planned a large picnic party on the Thames. After lunch, when the baskets were being repacked, not a single knife could be found. He had dropped them over the side of the boat into the river. It was for this end, and this end alone, that the picnic had been planned.

Leigh Hunt was not a guest who could be easily spared at a dinner-party. He was for some years Carlyle's near neighbor in Chelsea. "He was here [in my house]," Carlyle writes, "almost nightly, three or four times a week, I should reckon; he came always neatly dressed, was thoroughly courteous, friendly of spirit, and talked like a singing-bird. Good insight, plenty of a kind of humor too; I remember little warbles in the tones of his fine manly voice which were full of fun and charm. . . . He had a fine, chivalrous, gentlemanly carriage, polite, affectionate, respectful (especially to her [Mrs. Carlyle]), and yet so free and natural." Nevertheless, with that miserable habit of depreciation which led Carlyle to pass the harshest judgments on the weaknesses of the men he met, however lenient he was towards the vices of those long dead, he wrote: "It is next to an impossibility that a London-born

man should not be a stunted one. Most of them, as Hunt, are dwarfed and dislocated into the merest imbecilities."

Charles Sumner saw Hunt in his home, "a humble house in Chelsea, with uncarpeted entry and stairs. He lives more simply, I think, than any person I have visited in England; but he possesses a palace of a mind. He is truly brilliant in conversation." George Ticknor also visited him on an evening when the Saturday Night Club met at his house. The young American scholar describes how "Lamb's gentle humor, Hunt's passion, and Curran's volubility, Hazlitt's sharpness and point, and Godwin's great head full of cold brains, all coming into contact and conflict, and agreeing in nothing but their common hatred of everything that has been more successful than their own works, made one of the most curious and amusing *olla-podrida* I ever met with."

Leigh Hunt, if he was the Harold Skimpole of Dickens's story, nevertheless, in his neediness, had the simplicity of a child. From the borrower's artifices he seems to have been entirely free. How pleasantly does this guilelessness appear in the following extract from a letter written by Macaulay soon after the publication of the "Lays of Ancient Rome:" "As to poor Leigh Hunt, I wish that I could say, with you, that I heard

nothing from him. I have a letter from him on my table asking me to lend him money, and lamenting that my verses want the true poetical aroma which breathes from Spenser's 'Faery Queen.' I am much pleased with him for having the spirit to tell me, in a begging letter, how little he likes my poetry. If he had praised me, knowing his poetical creed as I do, I should have felt certain that his praises were insincere."

It was on April 9, 1848, that the dinner took place at which Leigh Hunt should have been one of the guests. Not many parties, I think, were given in London on that night. Half the town went to bed full of alarm for the morrow. On the Continent, that spring, "thrones had been bowled down like ninepins." On April 10, the Chartists in a great host were to march to Westminster, bearing a huge petition to the House of Commons. No one knew what would happen. There was a dread among the more timid that London might rise, as Paris and Berlin had risen, and overturn government and constitution. The public buildings were fortified. How great was the alarm is shown by the following entries in Sir Rowland Hill's journal: —

"*April* 6. Went to the Mansion House to be sworn in a special constable with all the other officials. Serious apprehensions are entertained of an attack from the Chartists on

Monday next. Arms are being provided for the Post Office.

"*April* 8. Iron bars are being put to the lower windows. The buildings which command the entrances to the Post Office will be occupied with our people.

"*April* 10. The lower windows and doors of the office are defended by bars of iron and planks. Upwards of thirteen hundred of our people, a large portion of whom are well-armed, are divided into small parties, each with its officer."

Special constables were sworn in by tens of thousands. That day, as I well remember, we had a holiday at school; for most of the masters had been enrolled, and had gone off each armed with a stout staff. Among the properties of our school-theatre there were a few blunt cutlasses, such as the two young Crummleses used in the terrific fight in the inn-parlor witnessed by Nicholas Nickleby. These were sharpened on the grindstone. Part of the morning I spent in a workshop talking to an old carpenter and a blacksmith. We should not have been surprised had we heard the sound of firing from London, some few miles away. Our great trust was in "the old Duke," who, to the last day of his long life, was thought to be a match, and more than a match, for all the mobs, kings, and emperors in the world. How absurd the alarm seemed on the morrow,

when we learnt that, so far from a throne coming tumbling down, nothing more serious had happened than a scuffle on one of the bridges, in which a policeman had been wounded! He belonged to the village in which I lived. We all felt proud that it was our policeman, and not, this time, the old Duke, who was the hero of the day.

From the London 10th of April, with its one champion of order wounded, and its tens of thousands of staves in the hands of citizens by which scarcely a single head was broken, it is a wide step to Paris and the rising of the Commune. In a previous Talk I have spoken of one of the Communards. I have now before me two letters written by another of that wild crew. I have rarely met a man who interested me more. When I came to know his full story, I used to look on him with an aversion which sometimes amounted to a feeling of horror, that was tempered at the same time by a certain respect. He threw a light on the Reign of Terror. At last I was willing to believe that even in a Robespierre and a St. Just some virtue might have existed. This young Frenchman had lately passed through the Ecole Normale Supérieure with high distinction, and was fairly on the road to advancement in the career of a university professor, when he joined in the mad uprising of the Commune. What part

he played in it I do not know; certainly it was not equal to his ambition, for he did not succeed in becoming notorious. He escaped the pitiless massacre by the troops, a massacre in which the innocent and the guilty were alike shot down, and by the help of a friend found shelter, far from Paris, as tutor in the family of a colonel in the French army. Had the part he had so lately played been discovered by his employer, he would at once have been sent before a court-martial. He lived with this officer for several months, bearing in silence the exultation of the whole family over the punishment and the miseries of his friends, renewed each day when the newspaper came in. When the storm had blown over he made his way to England, where he supported himself by teaching. A more conscientious teacher could not easily have been found. He did his duty with the utmost strictness. He had brought over with him his aged mother, a widow, and towards her he was always the tenderest and most devoted of sons. In startling contrast with this tenderness there would sometimes blaze up in him the wildest ferocity. One day he was talking to me of the success of his principles and his party, which could not, he felt sure, be long delayed. "What do you mean to do," I asked, "when you have the upper hand?" With the fiercest glare in his eyes, clenching his right hand,

he replied, "Il faut égorger toute la bourgeoisie!" "Comment! toute!" I cried out with horror. "Oui, toute, toute, toute!" he answered, stamping on the ground. It was then I felt that at last I knew how such men as Robespierre and St. Just had looked. From England he went to America, where he spent some years. It was shortly after his return to Europe that I received from him the following letters. In 1881, as a newspaper correspondent, he accompanied the French expedition to Tunis. He had scarcely set foot on the coast of Africa when a wild Mahometan fanatic rushed upon him and struck him to the ground with a dagger, in the belief that he was killing a Christian. To be killed as a Christian would have been the greatest of all humiliations in the eyes of this poor Communard. Whether he learnt of the fatal blunder I do not know. I was told that he endured the sufferings of the few hours of life which were left to him with the greatest fortitude.

8 Juillet, 1879 [LONDRES].

MONSIEUR, — J'espérais vous voir, en retournant à Paris. Je savais que vous aviez quitté ——, mais j'ignorais votre adresse. C'est pourquoi je ne vous ai point écrit pour vous faire part du malheur qui m'a frappé l'année dernière : ma mère est morte le 16 Août, 1878. Elle dort maintenant sur la terre

RUINS OF THE COLUMN OF VENDÔME

d'exil et je suis seul, tout seul au monde. Après tout cela vaut peut-être mieux, car toute affection est la source de plus de douleurs que de joies. Rien n'est plus dur que de voir souffrir ceux qu'on aime. *Nil amare* est encore meilleur que *nil admirari.*

Je partirai la semaine prochaine pour la France. La République y est solidement établie, toutes les places sont à prendre, tout est à la portée des hommes de cœur et d'intelligence. Pour peu que la chance me favorise, vous entendrez parler de moi dans quelques années. En Amérique j'ai appris une bonne chose, c'est: *go ahead.*

Believe me, sir, yours truly,

—— ——.[1]

[1] July 8, 1879 [LONDON].

SIR, — I had hoped to see you on my way back to Paris. I was aware you had left ——, but I did not know your address; or else I should have written to inform you of the heavy blow which struck me last year: my mother died on August 16, 1878. She sleeps in the land of exile, and I am alone, all alone, in the world. After all, perhaps it is better thus, for from our affections spring more sorrows than joys. To see the sufferings of those we love is the hardest lot of all. *Nil amare* is even better than *nil admirari.*

I shall leave next week for France. The Republic is firmly established; every post is open to him who can seize it; everything is within the grasp of men of courage and understanding. If fortune gives me but a small share of her favors, before many years have passed my name shall be known. One good thing I learnt in America — to go ahead.

Believe me, sir, yours truly,

—— ——.

59 Rue des Feuillantines [Paris],
4—7bre, 1879.

Dear Sir, — Me voilà installé. Dès mon arrivée j'ai appris que j'étais amnistié. Je l'ignorais, et j'étais parti à tout hasard, j'en avais assez de l'exil.

J'en ai assez aussi de l'instruction, et je veux vivre de ma plume. Déjà quelques articles ont été acceptés et vont paraître incessamment. Je me suis arrangé avec l'éditeur d'un journal, qui m'a demandé de lui traduire quelques petites nouvelles de l'Anglais. . . . Mais ce que j'aimerais surtout à traduire ce serait un grand et bel ouvrage scientifique ou historique. . . .

Et vous, quand viendrez-vous à Paris? J'ai trouvé la grande ville bien belle. C'est là que la vie est, je ne dis pas bonne — elle ne l'est nulle part — mais supportable. Elle passe si vîte qu'on a presque pas le temps de souffrir.

Mais vous êtes, vous, un optimiste qui, j'en suis sûr, ne goûtez pas les charmes de l'anéantissement final. Et puis vous avez à faire sur la terre, tant d'affections vous y rattachent. J'ai vu Miss L—— et N——, j'ai retrouvé une jeune fille et un jeune homme où j'avais laissé des enfants. C'est à cela qu'on voit que l'on a vieilli. Miss M—— doit être une femme et E—— déjà un gaillard. Tout ce petit monde en grandissant

semble nous pousser vers la tombe. La place est restreinte à l'airée de la vie.

Croyez moi Yours truly

——— ———.[1]

My gloomy correspondent made one or two additions to my collection of autographs. The following letter was written to him in English by

[1] 59 RUE DES FEUILLANTINES [PARIS],
September 4, 1879.

DEAR SIR, — Here I am settled down. On my arrival I learnt that I had been included in the amnesty. In ignorance of this I had set out ready to run every risk, for I had had enough of exile.

I have had enough of teaching, too, and I mean to live by my pen. Some of my articles have already been accepted, and are to appear at once. I have come to an understanding with the publisher of a journal, who has asked me to translate for him some short stories from the English. But what I should like above all to translate is some important work on science or history.

But when are you coming to Paris? I have found the great city beautiful indeed. There, if anywhere, life is — I will not say good, for it is good nowhere, but endurable. It passes by so swiftly that time is scarcely left for suffering.

But as for you, you are an optimist, with not the least taste, I am sure, for the charms of that annihilation which ends everything. And then you have your work to do on this earth; you are bound to it by so many ties of affection. I have seen Miss L—— and N——; I have found on my return a young girl and a young man where I had left children. It is changes such as these which show us that we have ourselves grown old. Miss M—— is, no doubt, a woman, and E—— must be by this time a fine young fellow. All this little world, in growing big, seems to thrust us towards the grave. On this threshing-floor of the world there is only room for the sheaves of a single harvest.

Believe me. Yours truly

——— ———.

one of his comrades, who had, he told me, held the post of "intendant" during the Commune. It shows how these exiles had their purses in common.

Monday morning.

DEAR ——: When you come at London next Wednesday bring me please 2 or 3 pounds, because I have no more money.

Your in Friendship

——— ———.

Another letter which he gave me is a strange piece of patchwork, for no two words in it — and there are more than twenty — are in the same language. It was written by Napoléon La Cecilia, a man who spoke eight languages fluently, and read twenty-five easily. Through how many more he could have groped his way with the help of a dictionary and grammar I do not know. It was not only languages that he knew; for some years he had taught mathematics at Jena. Frenchman though he was by birth and education, nevertheless he joined the army with which Garibaldi invaded Sicily, and rapidly rose to the rank of colonel. For his skill and gallantry he was publicly thanked by Victor Emmanuel. He would not, however, serve under a king, and resigned his commission. He was in Paris when the war with Germany broke out, and he at once offered

his services to the imperial government. So sturdy a republican was as much distrusted as a German by Napoleon's ministers, and his offer was declined. He enlisted in the Franc-tireurs, and once more was made a colonel. When the republic was established, he was transferred, with the same rank, to the regular army, in which he distinguished himself by his defense of Châteaudun-on-the-Loire. Unhappily, he was swept away by the mad frenzy of the Commune. By the insurgents he was promoted to the rank of general. How he escaped to England I do not know. To disguise himself would have been almost impossible, so peculiar were his large goggle eyes. For five years he taught French in the Royal Naval School at New Cross. His health, which had suffered greatly from exposure in the Franco-German War, began to fail, and he left England for the milder climate of Egypt. "Here," as I learn from one who knew him well, "he never spoke of the Commune, never uttered a single Communistic opinion. Though his convictions remained the same, he effaced the past in his talk, and seemed to find content in earning a meagre livelihood by teaching French and Italian in a few English families. His erudition and keen intellect were, however, much valued by a small circle of friends; and it is pleasant to think that almost his last words were, 'France is at last in

the right way. I go content.'" The following brief note, written by him to a brother exile, gives some insight into the straightforward character of the man: —

22 Juillet, '72.

MON CHER ——: Dispensez-vous, je vous en prie, de m'amener le jeune F——, et avant de recommander les gens connaissez-les mieux.

Je vous serre la main.

Votre dévoué N. LA CECILIA.[1]

I have some interesting letters written at the time of the Franco-German War. The first five are from two young Frenchmen, whose father, a brave and honest patriot, had fled to England in 1851. When the war broke out, my correspondents were living near Paris.

July 13, 1870.

DEAR MR. HILL, — I think that we are on the eve of a terrible war with Prussia. The papers of this evening affirm that if Bismarck does not give satisfactory explanations to the French Cabinet before to-morrow evening, hostilities will begin immediately. What a horrible thing, to be

[1] July 22, 1872.

MY DEAR ——: I must beg you not to bring young F—— with you; before giving a recommendation know your man better.

With every friendly feeling,

Yours sincerely, N. LA CECILIA.

22 juillet 72

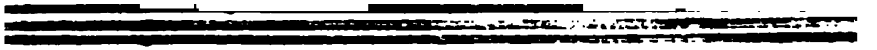
Mon cher

Dispensez-vous, je vous en prie de m'amener le jeune ~~[illegible]~~, et avant de recommander les gens connaissez-les vous-même.

Je vous serre la main

Votre dévoué

N. La Cécilia



sure! To see two nations murder each other to satisfy the personal ambition of those monsters who call themselves Kings and Emperors. I assure you that the majority of the French are far from desiring to fight the Prussians, and if an appeal were made to the nation the peace of Europe would not be troubled. No, this war has been plotted since a long time by Napoleon and his ministers; they made the Plébiscite to give new life to the faltering dynasty of the Bonapartes, so as to engage in this war with more safety. An excellent proof of this is that the navy had been fitted out before the news of the Hohenzollern affair were supposed to have reached the ears of the imperial cabinet. The offer of the crown of Spain to the German prince is therefore a mere pretext to come to hands.

Very truly yours,

—— ——.

PARIS, le 10 Août, 1870.

MY DEAR MR. HILL, — I was at —— when your letter came. Albert the eldest is probably on his way to the frontier. The younger was called yesterday. My brother and myself expect to be called in a couple of days, but we refuse to march unless the great murderer be put out of the way. We have my brother C—— in the south, although being only eighteen he cannot be called.

They won't give us arms to defend our homes; they want to send us to be butchered on the frontier under the orders of their rascally and stupid Generals. We have had treason; the money for the troops has been stolen by N.'s creatures, who have divided the spoil. All these men must be arrested and tried. Our only safety is in the republic; if it be not proclaimed in two days France is lost. We have nought but ruin and sorrow before us. Thank God that my poor father is not here to witness it.

We expect to be charged by the cavalry this afternoon at the Corps législatif, where we are going to ask for arms. If they won't give them we must take them.

Believe me, dear Sir,

Yours faithfully, —— ——.

August 19, 1870.

DEAR SIR, —. . . All the democratic journals have been suppressed, and the language of most of the government papers is so atrociously ferocious that it touches on idiotcy. Here they only busy themselves in looking for spies and tearing them to pieces. The papers invent wonderful doings of spies disguised as admirals, nuns, shepherds. The next canard will be that Bismarck having grown an imperial has tried to pass himself off as Napoleon. However, there is a kind of terror,

and one scarcely dares to express an opinion as regards the war. I maintain that the French nation is composed of Republicans, idiots and rogues, the two last classes making together a happy mixture. You think his [Napoleon's] downfall is near. I hope so, but fear it is not so, and that he will die at the Tuileries (if we are victorious) blessed by a happy people ! ! I expect everything now from the French, brutified by 20 years corruption and despotism, and if this comes to pass I shall make myself an English or American citizen.

A splendid opportunity of proclaiming the Republic has been lost. It might have been done on the opening of the French Chambers after the great defeat of Wissemburg. 10000 men were ready if only one *député* made a sign. Had this been done not one Prussian soldier would be this side the Rhine by this time. I am more than ever certain they will come to Paris, which town they cannot take, however. Well ! let us hope for the best.

Faithfully yours, —— ——.

P. S. The unfortunate men who attempting to take arms in a barracks killed a policeman are left to the tender mercies of a court martial. Their fate is certain. The government try to make believe these men are paid by Bismarck. They are simply victims of the *coup d'état* and

of 1849 who have neither forgotten nor forgiven their wrongs.

The next letter I received on December 9. It is written on a small sheet of thin paper, on the outside of which is printed "Par Ballon Monté." It had been dispatched from Paris in a balloon. Where it first touched ground there is no post-mark to show. The two stamps it bears are both of the republic. It runs as follows:—

1st December, 1870.

DEAR MR. HILL,—To-morrow morning at three we start with 100000 men to take part in the great battle. Perhaps the anniversary of the *coup d'état* will see the Republic victorious. All are resolved to fight to the last and all are confident of success, but how many brave men will not return!

Yours faithfully,

———.

1re Compagnie Eclaireurs volontaires 13me Bataillon.

If by chance you should communicate with my brother who is with my mother near Bordeaux, *pray do not mention this letter, as I have left him in utter ignorance of my brother and myself being in the army.*


PAR BALLON MONTE
M. Bill
Bruce Castle School
Tottenham
Middlesex
Angleterre
LONDON E.C.
DE 9 70

Both the brothers came off unwounded from the battle. One of them told me that at the beginning of the fight he was almost overcome by a feeling of horror at the thought of killing his fellow-creatures. Every time he raised his rifle to his shoulder he hoped that he should miss his mark. He had not been many minutes under fire when one of his friends, who stood next to him, fell dead. Then there came upon him a longing for vengeance, and now he hoped that every shot would strike down a man.

It was not till towards the end of the following February that I had any further news from my correspondent. On the surrender of Paris, when the posts once more began to run, I received the following letter: —

PARIS, 23 Fév. 1871.

CHER MONSIEUR HILL, — Des avantpostes où je me trouvais avec mon frère je vous ai adressé quelques mots la veille d'une sortie; je doute que vous ayez reçu ma lettre.

Sommes-nous tombés assez bas? Et cependant chacun a fait son devoir à Paris, l'impéritié de nos chefs a seule pu nous livrer. Nous avons souvent eu la victoire entre nos mains; le 19 Janvier nous avons pris d'assaut des murs imprenables, et nous avons refoulé l'ennemi si loin de Paris que je m'attendais à aller coucher le soir même dans ma maison.

Si la guerre continue nous irons sans doute dans quelque forteresse prussienne, mais si la majorité rurale arrive à bûcher quelque chose qu'on sera convenu d'appeler *la paix*, il faut que nous essayions de bâtir sur les ruines. La situation est difficile, mais après les obus, les balles, le froid et la faim rien ne peut m'effrayer.

Je crains bien que l'Angleterre n'ait à se repentir bientôt de son système de non intervention. Ce ne sont certes pas les sympathies du peuple qui nous ont manqué, nous en avons la preuve aujourd'hui. [This refers, no doubt, to the food sent from England to Paris as soon as the gates were opened.] La Prusse, dans son arrogance ne va-t-elle pas se jeter sur le Luxembourg, la Belgique et la Hollande?

Avant 8 ans la France attaquera la Prusse, j'en suis convaincu, à moins que les peuples ne s'unissent contre les rois pour former entre eux une seule et même famille. Mais que Bismarck et son roi nous arrachent les griffes, qu'ils nous rognent les ongles, pendant qu'ils le peuvent, car ils ont allumé dans le cœur de tout bon français une bien terrible haine.

Votre tout dévoué —— ——.[1]

[1] PARIS, February 23, 1871.

DEAR MR. HILL, — From the outposts where I was stationed with my brother I sent you a few lines on the eve of a sally. I have my doubts whether the letter reached you.

The French are indeed a strange people. They had fallen on Germany with cries of "À Berlin!" in the hopes of robbing it of all the country on the western side of the Rhine; and then, when the Germans proved the stronger, they bitterly reproached England for not coming to their rescue. A robber who had tried to run off with his neighbor's spoons, and had been seized by the owner, might just as well reproach the constable for not coming to his aid. As Mr. Lowell says,

Are we fallen low enough? Nevertheless, in Paris every one has done his duty; nothing but the unskillfulness of our leaders could have delivered us up to the enemy. We have often had victory in our hands; on January 19 we carried impregnable walls by storm, and we thrust back the enemy to such a distance from Paris that I looked to sleep that very night in my own house.

If the war lasts we shall doubtless be sent to some Prussian fortress; but if the country people who form the majority succeed in hewing out something which by common agreement shall be called peace, we must do our best to build on the ruins. The state of affairs is hard indeed; but after bombshells and bullets, cold and hunger, nothing can scare me.

England, I fear, will soon have reason to repent of her system of non-intervention. Most certainly it was not the sympathy of the people which failed us; of that we have proof this very day. Will not Prussia in her arrogance fall on Luxemburg, Belgium, and Holland?

Eight years, I feel certain, will not have gone by before France attacks Prussia, unless the peoples league themselves against the kings and form one single family. But let Bismarck and his king clip our claws and pare our nails whilst they can, for in the heart of every good Frenchman they have kindled the flame of dreadful hatred.

Yours very sincerely,

——.

"they are fearfully and wonderfully made in some respects." They are, perhaps, the most logical people in the world; they are certainly the most unreasonable.

I have lately read the last letter to one of my friends, a Prussian colonel, who was at the siege of Paris. There was, he said, some fierce fighting on this 19th of January, though near St. Cloud, where his regiment was posted, the French were soon beaten back. Nowhere for a single moment were they within reach of victory. The German outposts were driven in, as outposts always are driven in, by the sudden attack of a large force. The *murs impremables* were garden-walls which had been loopholed. These were carried at the first onset, but as soon as the reserves were brought up, and a battery of more than forty guns opened fire, the French were driven back with great loss. Close to where my friend was posted, ten or twelve of their officers, who with a strong body of men had occupied a large house, were cut off from retreat by this hasty flight. An officer of the German staff summoned them to surrender, as resistance and escape were alike hopeless. They had no help for it, and laid down their arms.

The next two letters are from an Alsatian, one of those brave and eager spirits who in times of danger always hurry to the front. He was about five-and-thirty years old when the war broke out,

but as soon as the news reached him of disasters to his beloved France, at a moment's warning he threw up a good post which he had in England, and went to serve as a private soldier. He came to see me on his release from a Prussian fortress, full of bitterness towards his countrymen. By his fellow-soldiers, on his first arrival in France, he had been received, he said, with scorn. "Why had he been such a fool as to thrust himself into this mess, when he was safe and well off in England?" Had there been, he said, his face lighting up with fire as he spoke, one hundred thousand men like himself, the Germans would have been driven out of France. In his foreign prison he had done what little he could for his country by secretly making a plan of the fortress.

BOULOGNE SUR-MER, August 11th 1870.

DEAR SIR, — As soon as we heard of the bad news that the Prussians had invaded France, my friends and I we hastened to go to our Embassador to get our passeport, and went directly to Boulogne, amidst a tremendous enthusiasm. If we succeed in our enterprise, I shall come back to London; but should we experience some other defeats, we are determined to be killed. Four of my friends are enlisted among the Cuirassiers, and I and an other we are enlisted among the sharpshooters, or Chasseurs à Pied.

My address is: Mr. ——, 8me Compagnie du 20me Bataillon des Chasseurs à Pied.

I remain, Dear Sir,

Yours most devotedly, —— ——.

GRAUDENZ, January 17th 1871.

MY DEAR SIR, — I don't know if you have received the letter I sent to you from Sedan. You know that I was incorporated in the Chasseurs à pied, 20th Bataillon, directed from Boulogne to the Camp of Chalons, and from there to Sedan, where I was made prisoner of war. When I shall come back to London, I shall tell you all the particulars I have been able to witness during my short and fruitless campaign.

I have been brought to Graudenz, the most formidable fortress that is in Prussia. That town is situated on the Vistule. The citadelle dominates all the country; you may perceive from there the enemy, if he was at a distance of ten miles. It is very cold here, the thermometer shows 10° Fahr. below 0° in the middle of the winter.

Amidst the miseries of my captivity I find a great relief in recalling to my memory the happy time I have spent in the company of my dear pupils. I have all their names in my pocket-book, and I fancy sometimes to live with them. But that sweet dream fades away, I am awaked

by the noise made by the Prussian patrollers, when they are going out of their guard-room.

You are better able than I to know what they are doing now in France; however I should like to know it also, I prefer you to be silent about it, if you favour me with a letter.

I pray only the heaven to grant an honourable peace to my country, in order that I may come back to London and pay you a visit.

My friendly salutations to my pupils. If one of them would procure me a great pleasure, he ought to give some news about what is passing with them.

I remain yours most respectfully,

—— ——,

Chasseur à pied au 20me bataillon, prisonnier de guerre 1re Compagnie à Graudenz, Prusse.

The letter which this brave man sent to me from Sedan, unfortunately, never reached me.

The following brief note I received from a young Frenchman who had been studying in England under my charge. I have never heard from him since, and I fear that he fell in the war.

15th Aug. '70.

DEAR SIR, — I am obliged to go back to France, to serve my country. I am sure I would rather stay at home than go and be killed, but I am not free to act as I would.

Assuredly we have been misled by our ministers; it is shameful to see such a state of things. But we can only say with Fénelon, "Avant que de se jetter [*sic*] dans le péril, il faut le prévoir; mais quand on y est il ne reste plus qu'à le mépriser."

I beg now to thank you once more for your kindness towards me and remain your's friend and obliged ——— ———.

From another former pupil of mine I received the following card, bearing the postmarks of Paris, October 17, 1870, and of London, October 20. It had been sent, no doubt, by the balloon-post. It bears two stamps, one marked "Empire Français," and the other "Répub. Franc."

Dear Sir, — I am in good health. Expecting the Prussians every day. I did not fight yet. I am in the artillerie. My father and mother are in Normandie. I have no news from them. My brother is in the 99e de ligne at Aix in Provence —near Marseilles. I do not know what is become of him.

My kindest remembrances to you and your family. ——— ———.

On the surrender of Paris he sent me the following letter, dated February 20, 1871:—

DEAR SIR, — You will very likely believe that I am death! Thanks to God I am yet alive! For the two first months I was a soldier, the batterie in which I was stopped in the Mont Valérien. It was very dull indeed to be confined there for two whole months without going out but now and then.

On the 15th of September we came in Paris where we are still now. Since that time untill the armistice we were not happy at all, I can assure you. We had to sleep on the ground, weit [wet] most of the time; the feeding was so miserable than very often we could not eat it. I caught rheumatism, and was sent to the ambulance. For two months I kept the bed for the whole time; now I feel better and better, and I hope to go to a village near Périgueux, where my father is.

What do you think of our poor France; how unhappy we were without stupid war! What will become of Alsace and Lorraine? I read in the papers with a great pleasure that English people were quite simpathic to us.

My brother who is in the 99e de ligne is in good health; he did not leave Aix in Provence, what I am glad of. I must tell you something rather curious. I am in the ambulance of Mr. De ——; that gentleman, about forty-eight years old, was brought up under the cares of your father. He does not remin [remember] neither you nor your

brothers. I am afraid you will not be able to make out my poor English. It is so long since I could speak a single word, having no opportunity of practising.

I am, Sir, yours very respect[ly]

——— ———.

The last of these letters of the great war is from a young Spaniard who had sought shelter in England when the Germans threatened Paris, and who had returned to his old quarters in that town. Under date of March 3, 1871, he writes: "We started from Calais at seven in the morning, and after a very tiresome journey of twelve hours we got into Paris. . . . Paris was very gloomy last Tuesday evening, for there was no gas in the streets, but to-day the weather is most beautiful, and everything is almost as gay as before the siege; the Parisians feel the Prussians are gone, and the streets are animated with a motley throng, great many soldiers of all sorts, but most of them unarmed. It is a funny thing to look at the people here, you can see *les garçons de café* with their white apron, but wearing under it some military ornament; the butchers, bakers, booksellers, etc., are half civilians and half soldiers.

"I have found all my books and things I left care of my *portière* on leaving Paris. I have from my window a good view of the Colonne de la Bastille, which is completely ornamented with

flowers and flags. Just as I am writing to you some battalions of *Gardes nationaux* with bugles and beating drums are passing before, or rather under my window (I am in the 4th story); every one is decorated with yellow flowers, and one of them bears a huge everlasting crown, which will increase the number of those ornamenting already the Colonne. 'Greatest order prevails.' They seem delighted with these innocent demonstrations, the good Parisians."

In the summer of this same year I happened to be dining with a citizen of Versailles, when he was called from the table by his servant. On his return he handed me the following document: —

MAIRIE DE VERSAILLES. RUE D'ANGIVILLER, no. —
AU NOM DE LA LOI.

M. —— rent. ou la personne qui occupe le local, logera, pendant un jour, Deux Militaires.

Pour M. LE MAIRE,
le Chef du Bureau militaire.

Bon pour —— lit.

VERSAILLES, ce 22 Juillet, 1871.[1]

[1] TOWN HALL OF VERSAILLES.
IN THE NAME OF THE LAW.

Mr. ——, gentleman, or the person in actual occupation of the premises, is required to lodge two soldiers for one day.

For the MAYOR,
the Superintendent of the War Office.

Valid for —— beds.

VERSAILLES, July 22, 1871.

My friend had at once to provide lodging for the two soldiers who themselves brought him this order. France was, I thought, in point of liberty, two centuries and a half behind England; for, by the Petition of Right, it was enacted in the reign of Charles I. "that no soldier shall be quartered on the subject without his own consent." Nevertheless, if my memory does not play me false, more than one of George III.'s governors attempted to quarter soldiers on the citizens of New England.

That Frenchmen should so often have proved restive under the law causes little surprise to those who know how meddling their central government has at all times been. I have a curious document which shows that, less than sixty years ago, in France, no one might take a pailful of water from the sea without first obtaining permission at the custom house. The tax on salt, which was heavy, was not to be evaded by the use of sea-water. A license was granted, on my father's application, to the landlady of the house in which he had taken lodgings: —

BOULOGNE-SUR-MER, 22 Juin, 1837.
Administration des Douanes, 1ère Division.

Il est permis à Made Talavera demeurant à Boulogne, de faire prendre à la mer tous les jours, pendant un mois, six seaux d'eau pour de baines.[1]

[1] In the original it is either "de baines" or "de bainer." It is not "des bains."

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MAIRIE
DE VERSAILLES.

BILLET
DE LOGEMENT.

Art. 11 du Décret du 23 Mai 1792.

Les Dépositaires des Caisses publiques ne seront point obligés de fournir le logement dans les maisons qui renferment lesdites Caisses; mais ils fourniront le logement en nature chez d'autres habitants, avec lesquels ils s'arrangeront pour cet effet. — La même exception aura lieu en faveur des Veuves et des Filles.

Rue d'Anjouvelles n° 11 bis

AU NOM DE LA LOI.

M Roubaud sent.

ou la personne qui occupe le local, logera, pendant

un jour ~~un Officier.~~

deux Militaires.

Versailles, ce 21 juillet 1871

Pour M. le Maire,

le Chef du Bureau militaire.

Bon pour lit

Le chef du poste de la jetée de l'est mentionnera les quantités d'eau enlevées, et renverra la présente permission au bureau de la Direction.

Pour le Directeur des Douanes,
Le Premier Commis de la Direction,
ROUGET.[1]

When I was staying at Vichy, some years ago, I saw an extraordinary instance of that centralization of the government which, next to the corruption of Louis Napoleon and of his generals, laid France low at the feet of Germany. In the bath-room was placarded the number of towels allowed to each bather. This regulation was issued by the mayor of the town, was countersigned at Moulins by the prefect of the department, and was approved at Paris by the Minister of the Interior. Neither Frenchman nor foreigner, though he took his bath at a distance of more than two hundred miles from Paris, was overlooked by the paternal eye of the government. Of his lawful number of towels no hireling should deprive him.

[1] BOULOGNE-SUR-MER, June 22, 1837.
Custom House, First Department.

Permission is hereby given to Mme Talavera, an inhabitant of Boulogne, to have six pails of sea-water fetched from the sea for baths every day for a month.

The head of the guard stationed on the eastern jetty will report the quantity of water taken each day, and will return this license to the chief office.

For the Collector of Customs,
ROUGET, Chief Clerk.

From France I shall take my readers across the Pyrenees to Spain, which in its turn was shaken by revolution. My correspondent was a young officer of the army. He wrote to me as follows:—

MADRID, 11th March, 1873.

DEAR SIR,—The letters from the special correspondents of the London newspapers will have already informed you of the state of my unhappy country. You will, no doubt, by association of ideas, now and then thought of me while you were reading of them.

If you saw my room at present you would think of the assortment of fire arms and small arms that Robinson Crusoe kept in his dwelling, when he was expecting an attack from the canibals. As unfortunately the army is now become so demoralized through Republican preachings, socialism, infidelity, and as the city is full of return convicts, french comunists, unemployed worksmen and all scum of society, we are in continual aprehension of having our houses sacked by the mob. After two or three days of desagreable panic the middle classes, stimulated by the example of the higher orders, are arming themselves.

There is scarcely a fire arm that has not been bought up, so that every house is become a military arsenal. In my house we mustered about thirty men, what with coachmen, servants, aides

de camp of my father and orderlies, and as most of us have served in the regular army, I don't think that any of the new Comunists will find it healthy to make our acquaintance, but if they think it healthy they shall be well received, for we are well prepared, that is to say my brothers and servants, for myself I shall be probably in the street with the troops.

Many officers have arrived in Madrid from the provinces, having escaped fortunately from the troops, who are now become in many places a dangerous and mischievous mob. Here they are better, but still we are always exposed to be murdered or to be insulted by the people, and we have very little authority with our soldiers. It is very annoying indeed to be an officer in these circumstances.

I avail myself of this occasion to declare myself your most obedient servant,

——— ———.

In my collection there are but two American autographs. I would there were more. If nature abhors a vacuum, so do I. I hasten to say that it is not by dealers that this unseemly void will be filled, if filled it ever is. The excess postage which I have just had to pay on one of their circulars (it comes from Baltimore) leads me to give this warning. I never buy autographs. My

American treasures, few as they are in number, are of a fine quality. One of them, as my readers have seen, is in the handwriting of George Washington; the other is a letter of William Lloyd Garrison.

Not as yet has Garrison's greatness been fully recognized by the world. Even his own countrymen too often do not seem to know that in him they had one of the great ones of the earth. In the noblest of all causes, the cause of freedom, he was "as harsh as truth and as uncompromising as justice." It was not smooth things that he came to speak, for it is not by smooth things that the slumbering conscience of a mighty nation is awakened. It takes long years before the full greatness of the stern teachers of mankind like him is acknowledged. The time will come, I believe, when the historian will rank Garrison among the men — few they are in number — who by strength of character, and by strength of character alone, have worked the mightiest changes in the history of the world. John Bright saw his greatness. I was present at the public breakfast given to Garrison in London nearly thirty years ago, when that noble orator described him as a man

"On Fame's eternal bead-roll worthy to be filed."

Garrison's letter is in answer to the following strange communication: —

—— ILL. Mar. 2, 1874.

HON. W^M LOYD GARRISON:

DR SIR,— A little over thirteen years ago John Brown's famous attack on Harper's Ferry occurred. At that time the writer was a resident of Martinsburg, Va. As soon as the news of the attack reached me I, in company of quite a number of others, citizens of Martinsburg, went to assist in fighting the insurgents. Of course you are well acquainted with the whole history of the events that followed the attack, that we did nothing more than drive Brown and his associates into the Arsenal, where they stood on the defensive, until the arrival of Col. Lee and the squad of Marines, when the door was battered down, and all either captured and [*sic*] killed. I entered the arsenal with, or immediately after the Marines, and on the floor of the building I picked up a Sharp's Rifle, and carried it off as a trophy. I have kept that rifle ever since, carrying it with me when I left Virginia, during the Civil War. You are, or rather were the leading Abolition [*sic*] of the country, and of course sympathized [*sic*] Brown, and perhaps would value the rifle as a relic. I also obtained one of the famous Pikes on Maryland heights the next day, but it was stolen from my house by a squad of rebel soldiers, who searched it for arms. If you wish to have the rifle and I can satisfy you in any way that it is what I repre-

sent it to be, I will send it to you by express, you agreeing to send me $25 for it.

Yours truly —— ——.

Garrison replied: —

Boston, March 7, 1874.

Dear Sir, — In answer to your letter I would state that I must decline the proposition contained in it, in regard to purchasing the rifle in your possession, as, for forty years, I have been avowedly a radical peace man, and am still for beating all swords into ploughshares, and all spears into pruning-hooks, so that every man may sit under his own vine and fig-tree, with none to molest or make afraid. I gave no sanction to John Brown's method of emancipating the slaves, though conceding to him the purest and noblest motives. According to the theory of our government and the example of our revolutionary sires, he was a hero and a martyr, and so the civilized world regards him. That you should have had a hand in his capture and death, however true to your sense of duty at that time, is now, I trust, a matter of deep regret on your part, seeing that while he remembered those in bonds as bound with them, you took sides with their cruel oppressors.

Yours for the reign of universal freedom and peace.

Wm Lloyd Garrison.

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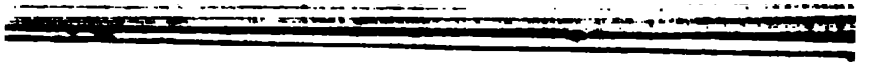
Yours for the reign of universal freedom and peace

Wm. Lloyd Garrison.

I trust that I have not wearied my audience with my talk about autographs. Collectors are apt to be garrulous over their treasures, and garrulity does not lessen as the years creep over a man. I warned my readers in the beginning that I should treat them as I treat my friends when they enter my study. I should be sorry to think that I have taken an ungenerous advantage of their kindness. If they are not weary of me, perhaps, by the help of a friendly publisher, we may meet again before very long, and once more converse about men and books. Whether that hope is granted or not, may some of my readers, as they now take leave of me, be able honestly to say with Dr. Johnson, "Sir, we had good talk."



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